

AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD RUSSIA, 1939-1945:

A SURVEY OF SELECTED SOURCES

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PREFACE

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Q. 2 Most people would agree that World War II was an era in which Americans most obviously felt a kinship with Soviet Russia. During this period the American government and the Soviet government closely cooperated. But, since this period of at least ostensible governmental cooperation ended ultimately with the Cold War, one questions the depth and breadth of this cooperation. Did the American people, during World War II, ever really feel comfortable with the strange ally that Hitler's aggression had created? What attitudes did Americans manifest toward Russia during the war? Were Americans' attitudes consistent, or did they change? How did Americans' attitudes foreshadow the advent of the Cold War?

The objective of this study is to provide at least tentative answers to these questions by surveying American attitudes toward Russia from 1939 to 1945. Sources for making this survey are myriad, and for this reason I have limited my survey to selected periodicals, primarily those which were popular during the era and those which commented frequently about the Russian-American relationship. Two periodicals which represent opposing viewpoints are particularly significant in reflecting the pro- and anti-Russian sentiment in America. The New Republic was consistent in expressing the viewpoints of those who sympathized with Russia's aims, and The Commonweal, a conservative Catholic

weekly, expressed anti-communist views.

In addition to the sentiments given by periodicals (and the New York Times), I have included letters to the editor (which indicate that readers feel strongly enough about a subject to go to the trouble to write about it), and the findings of public opinion polls.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
I. AMERICA'S DISTRUST OF RUSSIA: 1939-1940. .	4
II. AMERICA'S SUPPORT OF RUSSIA: 1941-1943 . .	27
1941	28
1942	41
1943	51
III. AMERICA'S DISILLUSIONMENT WITH RUSSIA . . .	72
1944	72
1945	85
CONCLUSION	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY	101

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INTRODUCTION

In order to put the American attitudes toward Russia during the Second World War into proper perspective, one must understand the backgrounds for these attitudes;¹ especially important was the American reaction to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917. Being champions of democracy, Americans approved of the overthrow of the Russian monarchy early in 1917, and the United States government officially recognized the new provisional government. American optimism was dashed, however, when the provisional government itself was overthrown by the Bolsheviks in November, 1917. This revolution, against a popular rather than an autocratic government, was viewed suspiciously by Americans (it was, in fact, fifteen years before the American government officially recognized the government that this revolution installed). Because they received news about

¹The information contained in this introduction is a synthesis of material that can be found in several works dealing with the period. See, for example, Harold Fisher, America and Russia in the World Community (Claremont, California: Claremont College Press, 1946); Christopher Lasch, The American Liberals and the Russian Revolution (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); George Kennan, Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960); Peter G. Filene, American Views of Soviet Russia, 1917-1965 (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1968); Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964); Norman Gordon Levin, Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); George Kennan, Russia Leaves the War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); George Kennan, The Decision to Intervene (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

the excesses of the Bolsheviks and about the violence and disorder in Russia, Americans were apprehensive. Their suspicions of the Bolsheviks seemed to have been confirmed when the Bolsheviks repudiated the Russian debts to America and when they signed a separate treaty with Germany (thus ignoring their obligations to the Allied cause, a major concern of Americans at this time). In 1918, the United States government took definite steps against the new Russian government by sending two separate military expeditions to Russia which were designed, in part, to help those forces opposed to the Bolsheviks.

After World War I, Americans became even more concerned about the effects of the Bolshevik revolution. What had been an unfortunate disruption of the democratic plans of the Russians became an apparently serious threat to the democracy of the United States. Because the United States was troubled by postwar labor problems, strikes, and terroristic incidents such as the 1919 bomb scares at a time when Trotsky was calling for world revolution and the Comintern was founded, America attributed its domestic crises to the communist conspiracy.

When the declarations of the communists failed to materialize into world-wide revolution, and when labor conditions in the United States stabilized, the "Red Scare" subsided. Americans began to bask in the prosperity of the postwar period, and regard for the Soviet Union, for the

most part, dwindled into indifference.²

Russian economic programs, the New Economic Policy and the subsequent Five Year Plans did interest practical businessmen and idealistic liberals in America, especially during the Depression. This interest became almost monopolized later by radicals who carried their enthusiasm for the Soviet Union and its programs to the extreme by claiming that capitalism was dead. Later the infamous Russian purges--the charges, trials, and confessions--captured the attention of the American public; Americans also noticed that some of the pro-Soviet commentators in the United States attempted to justify these purges and that others publicly reaffirmed their faith in the Soviet Union in spite of the purges.

American attitudes toward Russia during the years 1939 to 1945 were largely responses to specific current actions of Russia; however, three basic elements--underlying American friendliness for the Russian people, distrust and dislike of the Russian government, and a fear of Soviet sympathizers in the United States--were contributing factors to the American reactions to, and opinions about, Russia throughout the course of World War II.

²Franklin Roosevelt, always sensitive to public opinion, was able to push through American recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933; this action is indicative of a change in American attitudes, from fear of communism to apathy.

CHAPTER I

AMERICA'S DISTRUST OF RUSSIA: 1939-1940

The principal events in 1939 and 1940 which stimulated Americans' interest in Russia were the Soviet-Nazi pact of August 21, 1939, and Russia's invasion and overwhelming of Finland, November 1939-March 1940.

An article appearing in the June 1939 issue of Harper's, "Europe's Secret Nightmare," indicated that a Soviet-Nazi pact was feared even before it became a fact in August. Although some close observers had foreseen a possible Russian-German friendship, the treaty took many people by surprise.¹ The prospect of Russia's joining forces with Germany, implied by the signing of a ten year non-aggression and neutrality pact, was difficult for all but the staunchest sympathizers of Russia to accept. Indeed, some pro-Soviet supporters were embarrassed when the object of their admiration seemed to have disregarded policies that they had publicly endorsed, especially the anti-Nazi position. The very week of the signing of the pact, a group of four hundred American intellectuals² had publicly

¹See "Sudden German-Soviet Deal Leaves Europe Thunderstruck," Newsweek, XIV (August 28), 1939, 16; "Power Politics: Nightmare," Time, XXXIV (August 28, 1939), 20; and a New York Times editorial, "After the Shock," August 23, 1939, p. 20.

²The list included college professors, journalists, and people of the literary world such as Granville Hicks,

denounced "attempts to bracket the Soviet Union with the Fascist states" and in a letter had cited ten basic points "to make it clear that Soviet and Fascist policies are diametrically opposed."³ A similar letter had been reported in the New York Times on August 14.⁴ Four hundred leading figures in education and arts and science had written an open letter appealing for closer cooperation between the United States and Soviet Russia. They said that such cooperation would do much to combat growing reactionary and fascist movements throughout the world and would further the cause of world peace and security. The letter mentioned that "with the aim of turning anti-fascist feeling against the Soviet Union [fascists and their friends] have encouraged the fantastic falsehood that the USSR and the totalitarian states are basically alike."⁵

American magazines noted the incongruity of the intellectuals' ideals with the facts in such articles as "Blushing Leftists--Nazi-Red Deal Leaves Trail of Embarrassment in the United States," and "The Liberal '400' Hail the

Maxwell Stewart, Max Lerner, Raymond Robins, I. F. Stone, Louis Untermeyer, James Thurber, William Carlos Williams and others.

³This full-page letter appeared in The Nation [CIL (August 26, 1939), 228] which had gone to press before the news of the signing of the pact broke.

⁴New York Times, August 14, 1939, p. 15. Though many of the professors signed both letters, the lists are not identical.

⁵Ibid.

USSR."⁶ In the latter editorial, the "either naive or malicious attempt of this intelligential '400' to deny the tyranny and deadening character of Russian government and culture" was condemned:

The actual end of Communist thought, word and deed is nobody's idea of democracy and peace--it is closer to the concept of Stalin's allies, the Nazis of Germany. Someone should tell "the 400" that the Popular Front is dead and was a crippling fraud while it existed.⁷

In an article in Newsweek, Raymond Moley noted the inconsistency of the Soviet Union's practices with its stated ideals:

It is one of the grimmest ironies of history that when Socialism and Communism came into the world they proclaimed as their purpose the freeing of workers from their chains, for the two great nations most deeply imbued with those doctrines are now re-creating forms of slavery that we had thought had passed away centuries ago.⁸

⁶Newsweek, XIV (September 4, 1939), 12; and The Commonweal, XXX (September 1, 1939), 425-426.

⁷Ibid. Interestingly enough, in a later editorial, The Commonweal warned of the danger that the disillusioned pro-Soviet intellectuals might turn to "rabid native Americanism"; chauvinism was a possible domestic condition to be avoided. "Where Will the Intelligensia Go?" XXX (September 8, 1939), 445-446. Other writers were not concerned with what would happen to the intellectuals; they were more indignant at the audacity of the intellectuals' ideas. See Raymond Moley, "What is Aggression?" Newsweek, XIV (November 13, 1939), 60; and William H. Chamberlin, "Letter to the Editor," The American Mercury, XLVIII (November, 1939), 380-381.

⁸Raymond Moley, "Perspective," Newsweek, XIV (October 16, 1939), 64.

Other magazines gleefully published quotations of communists which were invalidated by the Soviet-Nazi pact.⁹

The New York Times expressed concern about the pact in such editorials as "If War Comes": "Whatever the agreement means, it is not peace, it serves only to aggravate the crisis. . . . The sham fronts are down and the anti-democratic systems are on one side and the democracies are on the other. Inevitably we are more deeply engaged in the conflict."¹⁰ Other articles stressed the similarity of the aims and methods of the Soviet and Nazi governments.¹¹ American reaction to the pact (reported in the Times) seemed to indicate that Americans regarded the agreement as a foreboding of war; news items included mention of Americans in Europe making arrangements to come home and Americans at home praying for peace. Letters to the editor urged an isolationist stance on the part of the United States; one writer declared, "Let the United States steer clear of all dictatorships, Nazi, Fascist or Communist" and "maintain a vigilant neutrality."¹²

⁹See "Comrades: Quotations," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXII (September 23, 1939), 34; "Before the Russian Pact: Statements on Aggression by Soviet Leaders," Current History, LI (November, 1939), 49; and "Lunacy: Right and Left," [statements of communists before and after the pact] compiled by C. Y. Harrison, The American Mercury, XLVIII (October, 1939), 170-171.

¹⁰New York Times, August 24, 1939, p. 18.

¹¹Ibid., August 27, 1939, IV, pp. 3, 4.

¹²Ibid., p. 9.

Two editorials in the Times showed a degree of originality and thoughtfulness not evident in other articles commenting about the Soviet-Nazi situation. One, "Shall Not Have Died in Vain," recognized the irony in the fact that the agreement was ultimately finalized after both German and Russian generals and advisors had been put to death for suggesting such action. Surely, the Times continued, the ghosts of those men were in the room with Stalin and von Ribbentrop as they signed the agreement.¹³

A later editorial suggested a rather unusual and imaginative handling of the threat of Russia:

England and France might take a leaf out of the book of Hitler's predecessors twenty-two years ago. In 1917 the German Government dispatched the exiled Nikolai Lenin to Russia for the purpose of producing chaos in the country and crippling its military effort, a job which Lenin carried out to perfection. Today the British and French Governments might find it worth while to put Leon Trotsky on an airplane or a Black Sea Boat and land him Somewhere in Russia.¹⁴

In general, then, American commentaries about Russia after the signing of the treaty with Germany seem indicative of American opinion that Russia had revealed her true self and that those who had expected a profound difference between Russia and Germany were proven wrong by the pact.

¹³Ibid., August 23, 1939, p. 20.

¹⁴Ibid., September 13, 1939, p. 24.

There was a minority opinion, however, and it was very vocal. The New Republic was decidedly pro-Russian in its outlook, and became an apologist for the Soviet Union after the Soviet-Nazi pact.¹⁵ While others might have been "thunderstruck" at the prospect of the pact, The New Republic saw no undue cause for alarm: "We do not expect that out of this appeasement will grow that great bogey--an offensive and defensive alliance between Soviet communists and German nazis any more than a firm partnership between Britain and the Reich grew out of Munich."¹⁶ The journal predicted that Hitler would keep on "playing his self-destructive role" which would eventually bring on conflict with Russia. Furthermore, The New Republic pointed out a lesson to be learned by the United States:

It is that we should continue to be distrustful of idealistic slogans, interested propaganda, and simple-minded division of "good" and "bad" nations. Europe's affairs are still full of insincerity, devious methods, secrets and surprises, and we should not be taken aback at any treachery or weakness. The utmost possible realism and wariness must govern our action in relation to foreign affairs. It will not be argued that since the British Empire is deprived of Russian military help, we must

¹⁵In contrast, the liberal magazine The Nation voiced disillusionment with the Soviet Union and made no attempt to justify the pact and Russia's subsequent actions. See "Red Star and Swastika," CIL (August 26, 1939), 211-212; "Mystery of Moscow," CIL (September 23, 1939), 309-310; and "Dictators at Work," CIL (September 30, 1939), 337-338.

¹⁶"Stalin's Munich," The New Republic, C (August 20, 1939), 88-89.

step in to save it. Maybe so, but in that case, let us make the decision in terms of hard skepticism and not because of an ideological crusade.¹⁷

Although The New Republic found Russia's explanation for her action understandable (Russia was pushed into an alliance with Germany because negotiations with England and France had reached a hopeless impasse), the magazine was critical of Stalin's timing; after flirting with Britain and France, his action did the maximum amount of harm to the Allies and the maximum amount of good to Germany. But The New Republic defended Russia when Russia's possible desire for "spheres of influence" in Poland and the Baltic states was suggested:

Russia denies this and their record of past performances entitles them to the benefit of doubt. For one thing, the Russian government has not heretofore lied about its treaty commitments as most of the Western powers have done, and for another, Russia has not sought territory where a majority of population was hostile.¹⁸

In a later article, a writer for the magazine speculated that Stalin's reason for signing the pact was based almost wholly on the supposed military vulnerability of Leningrad and predicted that Stalin might change to the Allied side as soon as he was confident of his ability to defend Leningrad.¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸"Why Did Russia Do It?" ibid., C (September 6, 1939), 118.

¹⁹"Saint Peter's Window," ibid. (September 20, 1939), 187.

Readers of The New Republic were even less likely to condemn Russia's action than was the magazine itself. According to the editor's tabulation of thirty-eight letters commenting upon the Soviet-Nazi pact, twenty-six concluded that Stalin did the best he could for world peace; three expressed the belief that communism had suffered as an ideology, but that Russia was doing the best that could be done for Russia; ten agreed that the pact was Stalin's "Munich."²⁰

Some of the letters that were published in the same issue included opinions from "I think that the pact was Russia's triumph" to "If the trials and purges in Russia could not completely alienate the fellow travelers, I don't see how this change of front can do more to alienate them" to an ironic "Has not communism all these years been the Beast of [Hitler's] Apocalypse? Must he not now descend, in the eyes of his simple followers, from the role of Christ to the role of Judas? Stalin, on the other hand, has but forgiven his enemy, like a perfect Christian."²¹

The New Republic did concede that, because of Stalin's action, people had lost faith in the Soviet Union. Previously, there had been a widespread faith among "humble folk" that Russia "constituted a bulwark of honesty and

²⁰"Correspondence," ibid. (September 13, 1939), p. 161.

²¹Ibid., p. 181.

humanity in a treacherous world," but, with the breaking of her word when it was to her advantage, she lost this confidence.²²

Following the Soviet-Nazi pact, Americans were not particularly surprised that Russia joined Germany in the invasion of Poland. Since this action occurred shortly after the signing of the treaty, there was little American commentary about it; it probably seemed that the action was an extension of the implications of the pact.²³

The Russian invasion of Poland (September 17, 1939) was reported by The Nation, and another article in the same issue stated that the move was not surprising, that the aims of Stalin were to maintain his own power.²⁴ The Commonwealth was distressed that eastern Poland was in the hands of militant atheism ("Bolshevist Persecution Marches West").²⁵ Newsweek declared that "Soviet aid in carving up Poland portends new world line-ups."²⁶ The New Republic's only comment about the situation in Poland, however, emphasized the

²²"What Stalin Has Lost," ibid. (September 27, 1939), pp. 197-198.

²³As a matter of fact, The Nation had maintained earlier that danger to Poland was intensified by the Soviet-Nazi pact. See "Red Star and Swastike," op. cit., p. 337.

²⁴"Mystery of Moscow," op. cit., p. 309. See also "Dictators at Work," op. cit., p. 337.

²⁵The Commonwealth, XXXI (November 17, 1939), 88-90.

²⁶Newsweek, XIV (September 25, 1939), 11.

fact that in the area held by the Soviet Union elections were held under "the Soviet system of universal franchise," in contrast to the fact that no elections were held in the Nazi section of Poland.²⁷ The New York Times castigated Russia and Germany in editorials such as "Partners in Plunder,"²⁸ but the only trace of popular American reaction was implicit in two news items about Polish-Americans offering money and aid to Poland.

Although American reaction to the invasion of Poland was limited, the Russian invasion of Finland was not so calmly accepted by Americans. Finland enjoyed enormous prestige in the United States because she had paid back her debts from World War I; also her Olympic athletes had impressed a sports-minded America during the 1920's and 1930's.²⁹ Americans were indignant when a nation of such attributes had to defend herself against an aggressive Communist bully.³⁰ The invasion was presaged in a photographic essay in Life's October 30 issue: "Soviet Russia Crowds

²⁷"The Polish Elections," The New Republic, CI (November 1, 1939), 352.

²⁸New York Times, September 30, 1939, p. 16.

²⁹Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), p. 670.

³⁰A Gallup poll taken on December 31, 1939, showed that 88 per cent of Americans were sympathetic to Finland. See Public Opinion Quarterly, IV (Winter, 1939-1940), 102.

Nation of Democracy."³¹ Captions under the pictures indicated the preference of Life: "Finns are clean . . . honest . . . brave . . . religious."³² The New York Times indicated the probable course Finland would have to take and America's attitude toward the threatened country:

The Finns are ready to negotiate with Moscow on reasonable and honorable terms, but they are not ready to give up their independence gained when they broke away from Russia after the war.

The Finns have the sympathy of all Americans; not only did they establish a unique record in paying their debts but in twenty years they have built up a free, sound and enlightened state. No nation in Europe has done better, or better deserves to survive.³³

Later, when invasion was imminent, the Times reiterated America's sympathy for Finland and forecast a crippled relationship with Russia because of it: "Finland holds a particularly warm place in the respect and affection of the American people, and . . . an invasion of that country by Soviet troops would trouble American-Russian relations for many years to come."³⁴

³¹Other articles concerning Russia's aggression in the Baltic states include: "Soviet's Spread," Newsweek, XIV (October 16, 1939), 19-21; "Stalin in Europe: The Baltic," Current History, LI (November, 1939), 19-22; "Stalin's Shackles," Time, XXXIV (October 16, 1939), 39-42.

³²Life, VII (October 30, 1939), 69-77.

³³New York Times, October 12, 1939, p. 24.

³⁴Ibid., November 29, 1939, p. 22.

When the invasion occurred (November 30, 1939), Life reported it: "Reds Attack Finland by Land, Sea, and Air."³⁵ Newsweek featured an article about Americans' reactions to the Russo-Finnish war which concluded that Americans were overwhelmingly sympathetic to the Finns because Americans respected Finland for paying its war debts and because Americans had a growing antipathy to American communists and their tactics.³⁶ A further cause for American indignation was Russia's justification (reminiscent of nazi Germany's tactics) in declaring herself pushed by brazen aggressive acts of the Finns into "defense of her borders" (invasion of Finland).³⁷

Whatever the reasons for the sympathetic reaction, Americans did respond to Finland's predicament. One example of positive action generated by a group of private citizens was reported in Life. In El Dorado, Arkansas, 180 people attended a dinner in a hall decorated with Finnish and American flags and raised \$1750 for Finnish relief.³⁸

³⁵Major George F. Eliot, Life, VII (December 11, 1939), 34.

³⁶"Reaction to the Russo-Finnish War," Newsweek, XIV (December 11, 1939), 23.

³⁷See "Brazen Provocation," Time, XXXIV (December 4, 1939), 24; "Rabbit Bites Bear," ibid. (December 11, 1939), pp. 26-29; "By Fire and Sword," The Nation, CIL (December 9, 1939), 639-646; and "Finland Faces Russia," Current History, LI (December, 1939), 9-10.

³⁸Life, VIII (March 11, 1940), 8.

News items in the New York Times indicated that, unlike the similar situation concerning Poland, the incident aroused widespread American reaction. Americans of Finnish and Scandinavian descent were not alone in their support of Finland. Americans donating time and money to the Finnish cause included bankers, hotel men, governors and mayors, women's groups, AFL and CIO members, and artists and actors. People contributed to the Finnish Relief Fund headed by Herbert Hoover and to the International Red Cross, and they attended benefits such as art auctions, concerts, boxing matches and Madison Square Garden rallies whose proceeds were designated for the support of Finland. A "Finland Day" was proclaimed in many cities and states, and attention and sympathy was illustrated to an even greater degree when a Finnish colony in Massachusetts agreed to forego Christmas presents in order to send donations to Finland.³⁹

In the midst of overwhelming popular American support for Finland, three incidents indicated a slight dissenting opinion. The Abraham Lincoln Brigade, a group of young Americans who had fought for the Loyalists in Spain, condemned friends of Finland and adopted the slogan "the Yanks are not coming."⁴⁰ Another group, the American

³⁹New York Times, December 12, 1939, p. 5. See also "Reaction," Time, XXXIV (December 11, 1939), 15, for other examples of American actions which demonstrated anger at the invasion of Finland and sympathy for the Finns.

⁴⁰New York Times, December 25, 1939, p. 17.

Student Union, defended the Russian attack upon Finland.⁴¹ With similar sentiments, twenty-five communists in Aberdeen, Washington, held a "victory dance," but the hall was stormed and wrecked by uncompromising townspeople.⁴²

At least one American publication saw the Finnish situation as ultimately involving the United States. Declaring that "its settlement can only be worldwide," The Commonweal suggested that "we must hold firmly to another view of life than the Marxian; we must overcome our sovereign isolation before the enemy strikes."⁴³ The other view, of course, was the Christian view, and The Commonweal later voiced American Catholics' concern that the Catholic Church in Finland might suffer from a Russian

⁴¹Ibid., December 10, 1939, p. 60.

⁴²Ibid., December 4, 1939, p. 10.

⁴³"Sibelius is Forced to Decline," The Commonweal, XXI (December 15, 1939), 173. American involvement with Finland meant giving aid to the Finns, not American entrance into the war. George Denny, founder and moderator of the American Town Meeting of the World, conducted a poll which indicated overwhelming American support for the Finns, support for America's severing relations with Russia, but almost unanimous sentiment that the United States should not intervene. See George Denny, "What's Your Opinion? What Aid for Finland?" Current History, LI (March, 1940), 42-45. In "From Poll to Poll," The Nation, CIL (November 4, 1939), 484-485, facts were cited that indicated that Americans wanted the Allies to win but did not want the United States to enter the war. One theory explaining this American attitude was that nothing had happened to Great Britain yet; when Great Britain was seriously endangered, the United States would become involved militarily.

victory.⁴⁴ The Commonweal further insisted that: "If Americans assist Finland, it is not only because of the stricken people there, but also because there is an army run wild that Americans want to see run home."⁴⁵

On the other hand, there were Americans who advocated absolutely no actions on the part of the United States regarding Finland and the Soviet Union. The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade even adopted resolutions supporting Soviet Russia against Finland. They condemned "people who prate about the rights of small nations and about the Soviet Union, because she is wiping out an imperialist base for aggression."⁴⁶ The New Republic, although understanding and compassionate concerning the plight of Finland, nevertheless stated that the United States should play no part in helping her out of the crisis:

The American public is now being subjected to intense propaganda to provide war loans to Finland. What makes this propaganda so effective is that a large part of it is literally true. Finland certainly needs help and needs it quickly. . . . The American public sympathizes strongly with Finland's cause.

⁴⁴"Catholics in Finland," The Commonweal, XXXII (January 12, 1940), 256-257.

⁴⁵"Charity Involves Policy," ibid. (February 2, 1940), pp. 313-314.

⁴⁶"The Veterans Take a Vote," The New Republic, CII (January 1, 1940), 4. Even The New Republic, with its sympathetic leanings to Russia, found fault with the reasoning of these men who had previously risked their lives to support a democratic government against an attack by foreign invaders. See also "Americans and Russia," ibid. (January 15, 1940), pp. 70-71.

Where, then, is the catch in this propaganda drive? Obviously it is that the help Finland needs can be provided much more quickly and in larger quantities by other nations, which are nearer and more immediately concerned.⁴⁷

The magazine further declared that it looked as if the purpose of the all-out effort to play upon American sympathy was "to get us into the war by the back door."⁴⁸

A reader of The New Republic was not sympathetic to Finland's difficulties: "Finland with the assistance of the Germans by force overthrew the Bolsheviks. What is wrong with Russia's taking back Finland by the same methods?"⁴⁹ Another reader was equally unsympathetic to Finland and decidedly did not want the United States to become involved:

It looks down here [Columbia, South Carolina] like Finland is only getting what she asked for. Seems like a distortion to sneer that "big" Russia is defending herself against "little" Finland. Russia is obviously closing the door to attacks by the same "statesmen" who strangled Spain. Whenever I see papers with stories about "Poor Little," "Unhappy Little" Finland, I think of "Poor Brave Unhappy Little" Belgium of 1914, and pray that we don't have to start building additions to the nice big Veterans Hospital down here.⁵⁰

⁴⁷"Aid for Finland," ibid. (January 29, 1940), p. 132.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹"Correspondence," ibid. (February 26, 1940), p. 281.

⁵⁰Ibid. (January 15, 1940), p. 71.

Most other observers of the Russo-Finnish war, not necessarily suggesting the involvement of the United States, nevertheless did sympathize with Finland. Life, for example, in its week-by-week reports, indicated an admiration for the Finnish people and a disdain for the numerically superior but as yet ineffective Russian army. The title of an editorial, "Finns Prove Themselves Best Winter Soldiers in the World," suggested the author's bias, and seemed to be optimistic, but remarks in the article showed the writer's historical perspective in recognizing the probable outcome: "Gigantic losses in men have historically never made much impression on Russia because with them blood is far cheaper than material. They are used to terrible initial mistakes."⁵¹ Further evidence of Life's attitudes was shown in later war coverage. Life reported looting by Russians and continued to emphasize the skill of the Finns as superior arctic fighters. Photographs included such captions as "Red Dead," "Wolf Food," "Fighters Frozen Together," and "End of the Road."⁵² Other titles (of articles) evoked sympathetic responses as the war continued: "Finnish Town Hides in Woods to get away from Russian Bombers," "The Last Agony of Fighting Finland is Wrapped in Beauty of Snow,"

⁵¹Life, VIII (January 22, 1940), 13.

⁵²"Life's Photographer-Reporter in Finland Covers War in Winter," ibid. (January 29, 1940), p. 40.

"The Finland Line Breaks," "Finland Takes Russia's Peace," and "Soviet Army's New Weapons Conquered Finland."⁵³ Life reported the unsuccessful efforts of the Finnish ambassador to Moscow to make negotiations with Stalin and his comment, "They chose to resort to arms. On the Finnish side, we were, and still are, ready to negotiate."⁵⁴

As the war progressed and the results became clear, Life's opinion of the Russian army underwent a significant change. First Life emphasized the fact that the Finns were fighting overwhelming odds: "Having built up huge stocks of ammunition, the Russians moved forward in the extravagant style that has always been the Russian way of fighting."⁵⁵ Later it admitted that "the last stage of the Finnish war demonstrated that the Red Army is good--not so good as the German or French, but still a first class army."⁵⁶ Finally, when the Russians made public a film of the invasion of Finland, Life concluded:

Watching from the Finnish side, the world regarded the Russians with contempt. The contempt was undeserved. The Red Army is no joke, these pictures

⁵³Ibid. (February 26, 1940), p. 24; (March 11, 1940), pp. 23-27; (March 18, 1940), p. 34; (March 25, 1940), pp. 30-32; (April 1, 1940), p. 34. Life was not alone in evoking sympathy for the Finns with its news stories; other magazines, notably Newsweek, were equally biased.

⁵⁴Life, VIII (March 4, 1940), 10-11.

⁵⁵Ibid. (March 11, 1940), p. 23.

⁵⁶Ibid. (April 1, 1940), p. 34.

prove. It does not match the German army in staff work and weapons. It does not match the U. S. Army in organization and morale. But it knows how to fight and how to die.⁵⁷

A grudgingly-admitted respect for the effectiveness of the Russian army was one result as Americans watched the Finns valiantly struggle against and succumb to Soviet Russia. (Admiration for the Russians' ability to fight and to withstand much hardship was again evident later in the war when Russia was invaded by Germany.) Another result was almost universal American admiration and praise for the Finns. But at least one American observer questioned the value of the Finns' action:

All the world today is paying tribute to the valor of the Finns. But the common man, like Southey's Peterkin, is asking questions which even the press hesitates to ask. What was gained by the war in Finland? Finland's towns and cities were ruined, her people slaughtered, and at the end she was forced to give up much more than Russia had asked for at the beginning. What did she fight? . . . All such questions can, for the time being, be relegated to the realm of speculation. Meanwhile, the plain people of England, of France, and of Germany look at what has happened in Finland and ask why they must pass through similar or worse agony only to gain a peace by no means certainly better than the peace now available through negotiation.

It is the hour, Mr. President, to offer mediation.⁵⁸

⁵⁷"Russia Unveils the Invasion of Finland," ibid., IX (November 11, 1940), 71.

⁵⁸"After Finland, What?" The Christian Century, LVII (March 27, 1940), 409.

There were no other events in 1940 involving Russia which affected American opinion about Russia as did the situation in Finland. In fact, most of the articles concerning Russia that were written in 1940 appeared during the first half of the year and dealt with Russia's actions in Finland. The question of whether Russia would change sides was discussed, but especially when compared to the volume of articles written about Russia later, there was little in the news about Russia. Most attention was given to the belligerents in the war, and though Stalin was busily adding territory and consolidating Russia's position, Russia was still in fact a non-belligerent.

A study of articles, editorials and letters in weekly and monthly magazines is a primary means of determining American attitudes toward Russia, especially reactions to specific events; another method of measuring public opinion is the public opinion poll, which often reflects a climate of American opinion--general attitudes not particularly related to current events or Russian actions. Americans had the opportunity to express their opinions about Russia and about communism in six pollings in 1940 (compared to only two for the previous year). In response to a March poll by Fortune, Americans regarded Russia as second only to Germany as the worst influence in Europe.⁵⁹

⁵⁹"The Fortune Survey: XXVII," Fortune, XXI (March, 1940), 102.

In a different poll taken during the same month, seventy-three per cent approved of letting Finland raise money for her war against Russia by selling bonds to Americans.⁶⁰

Although Americans definitely did not want to become directly involved, the former poll indicated that Americans had become less neutral about the war, and there was a significant increase of those favoring giving aid to allies by all means short of war.⁶¹

Americans' attitudes toward Russia were probably related to their attitudes about communism, especially communism in the United States. Answers to questions regarding American communists were revealing: 55.6 per cent believed that the Communist party in the United States was composed of "mostly bad or misguided" people; 21.9 per cent thought it was composed of "half good, half bad" people; 4.1 per cent said "mostly good and intelligent" people, and 18.4 per cent said that they didn't know. When asked what the government should do with communist sympathizers, 37.8 per cent said they should be deported or put in jail, 32.9 per cent said the government should keep track of them and prevent them from agitating and organizing, 16.6 per cent said the government should keep track of them so that it

⁶⁰"American Institute of Public Opinion, March 10, 1940," Public Opinion Quarterly, IV (Spring, 1940), 359.

⁶¹"The Fortune Survey: XXVII," op. cit., p. 390.

could apprehend them if necessary, 9.3 per cent did not know what should be done, and 3.4 per cent thought the government should do nothing or no more than it was already doing.⁶²

The public's negative attitude toward Russia in opinion polls was quite similar to the official reaction of the American government. Russia's invasion of Finland caused President Roosevelt to call for a moral embargo on the shipment of airplanes and other war materials to Russia.⁶³ In a later speech, the President's recounting of his attitudes regarding Russia for the previous twenty years might be considered an apt summary of predominant American opinion:

More than twenty years ago, while most of you [members of American Youth Congress] were very young children, I had the utmost sympathy for the Russian people. In the early days of Communism, I recognized that many leaders in Russia were bringing education and better health and, above all, better opportunity to millions who had been kept in ignorance and serfdom under the imperial regime. I disliked the regimentation under Communism. I abhorred the indiscriminate killings of thousands of innocent victims. I heartily deprecated the banishment of religion. . . .⁶⁴

⁶²"The Fortune Survey: XXI," ibid. (June, 1940), p. 162.

⁶³Franklin D. Roosevelt, "The President Suggests to Manufacturers Not to Sell Airplanes to Belligerents Who Bomb Civilians, December 2, 1939," The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), VIII, 359-590.

⁶⁴Ibid. "Address to the Delegates of the American Youth Congress (February 10, 1940), IX, 93.

As he continued, his present attitude toward Russia was representative of current American opinion:

I, with many of you, hoped that Russia would work out its own problems, and that its government would eventually become a peace-loving, popular government with a free ballot, which would not interfere with the integrity of its neighbors.

That hope is today either shattered or put away in storage against some better day. The Soviet Union, as everybody who has the courage to face the fact knows, is run by a dictatorship as absolute as any other dictatorship in the world. It has allied itself with another dictatorship and it has invaded a neighbor so infinitesimally small that it could do no conceivable possible harm to the Soviet Union, a neighbor which seeks only to live at peace as a democracy, and a liberal, forward-looking democracy at that.⁶⁵

The events of 1939 and 1940 proved to Americans that the Russian dictatorship which Roosevelt spoke of was truly unsavory, worthy of the suspicion which was engendered by the Bolshevik revolution and the purges of the 1930's. But whereas Russians had been the victims of the earlier activities, these contemporary actions affected other peoples. Americans were distressed when Russia allied herself with a nation that had overrun smaller countries, and they were thoroughly disgusted with Russia's treatment of Finland.

⁶⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER II

AMERICA'S SUPPORT OF RUSSIA: 1941-1943

In 1941 a 1500-page book entitled What America Thinks was published. This book, consisting entirely of editorials and cartoons that appeared in American newspapers from 1938 through 1940, was principally designed to illustrate Americans' hatred of nazism, fascism, communism (and the countries which represented these evils, Germany, Italy and Russia).¹ During the next three years, however, American attitudes toward Russia changed drastically. The vehement dislike of the country that invaded Finland melted when that country itself was invaded by Germany in June 1941. And, the tentative acceptance of Russia as an ally in the months following her invasion evolved into an American enthusiasm for, and appreciation of, Russia after Pearl Harbor and after Russia's inspiring defensive campaign of 1942. This favorable American attitude toward Russia was tempered, however, by conditions in 1943. As Americans began to consider Russia as a potential partner in peace, some of Stalin's actions (especially regarding Poland) aroused American suspicions concerning his postwar goals. A survey of the events of 1941-1943 and the American reaction to them indicates that Americans were predominately pro-Russian during this time, but that there was

¹What America Thinks (Chicago: What America Thinks, Inc., 1941).

an ever-present suspicion of Russia voiced by some Americans even during this favorable period.

1941

Early in 1941 America's moral embargo of Russia was quietly lifted. This action brought perplexed responses from magazines that questioned the government's reasoning; Russia had given no sign that she repented her attack on Finland nor had she indicated that she would never repeat such an offense.² Moreover, one observer said that this action might be detrimental to American interests, for a friendlier American attitude toward Russia might frighten Japan into coming to terms with the Russians.³

Russia did not appear to appreciate this American action (or the slight change of attitude that it implied). In late February Stalin had Litvinoff replaced as Foreign Commissar, and some American magazines predicted a worsening of relations between the United States and Russia, for Litvinoff had been an advocate of strong American-Russian ties, and his successor was not.⁴

²See "Moral Embargo Against Russia Lifted," The Christian Century, LVIII (February 5, 1941), 1002-1004; and "Everywhere and Russia: A New Appeasement?" The Commonwealth, XXXIII (February 14, 1941), 411-412.

³Louis Fischer, "Moral Embargo," The Nation, CLII (February 8, 1941), 146.

⁴See "Bugs," Time, XXXVII (March 3, 1941), 29-30; and "Red Purge," Newsweek, XVII (March 3, 1941), 23.

Russia's relationship with Germany, on the other hand, seemed as friendly as ever in the first five months of 1941. American observers generally thought that Stalin would continue to placate Hitler, since Hitler seemed to be holding all the cards, economically and militarily.⁵ Even when there were indications of a German troop build-up on the Russian border, some Americans merely thought that Hitler was setting the stage to force new agreements from Stalin.⁶

Americans were warned to be wary of Russia by articles in the April issues of two major publications.⁷

⁵In an article, "Must Russia Fight Hitler?" [The American Mercury, LII (January, 1941), 24-32], Eugene Lyons maintained that an Allied wooing of Russia would be a waste of time, since both Russia and Germany were profiting from their relationship and there was still much each could do for the other before they came to grips, if ever. See also Oleg Hoeffding, "Germany's Economic Hold on the USSR," The Living Age, CCCLIX (February, 1941), 551-555; "Soviet-Nazi Partnership," The New Republic, CIV (May 26, 1941), 715-716; and R. Strausz-Hupe, "Stalin Makes His Choice," Current History, LIII (June, 1941), 35-36.

⁶"Mystery in Syria and on the Russian Frontier," The Christian Century, LVIII (June 25, 1941), 821-822. See also "Something Brewing," Time, XXXVII (May 12, 1941), 27; and "Something Wrong?" ibid. (June 23, 1941), p. 23.

⁷Freda Utley, "The Great Russian Illusion," The Atlantic Monthly, CLXVII (April, 1941), 470-477; and Henry C. Wolfe, "Keep an Eye on Russia," Harper's Magazine, CLXXXII (April, 1941), 533-541. Because of its subject matter (Russia's invasion of Finland), another article implied that Americans should be cautious of Russia. See Demaree Bess, "They Took Sweden by Telephone," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXIII (March 8, 1941), 25+.

Both articles emphasized the fact that Americans held illusions about Russia and were guided by wishful thinking rather than by a realistic appraisal of facts. One popular belief was that Russia was forced into signing the pact with Germany because of the inactions of France and England; both articles agreed that the Soviet-German partnership would last as long as it was mutually profitable. In disputing another misconception (that the Soviet system was more just and progressive, socially and economically, than those of capitalist countries), one author gave information regarding the life of the average Russian worker, who lacked personal, social, economic and political freedom.⁸ As for Russia's being somewhat better than Germany (a point that the author identified as another American misconception), the writer declared: "The essential difference between Russia and Germany lies . . . in the efficiency of the Nazi tyranny and the inefficiency of the Bolshevik tyranny."⁹

⁸Utley, op. cit., pp. 472-473.

⁹Ibid., p. 474. A similar argument was used by The Christian Century ["Shall We Fight for Russia?" LVIII (September 10, 1941), 1105] even after the German invasion of Russia: "With all of its achievements, the dictatorship which rules Russia is still the oldest and the bloodiest of the modern state tyrannies. While the difference between the nazi and the communist tyrannies is one of degree, not of kind, the degree happens in this case to be in the favor of Germany, not Russia."

Once Germany invaded Russia on June 22, however, a more important question was whether the United States should give aid to Hitler's new enemy. President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull both recognized the seriousness of Hitler's threat, and they felt that American aid to Russia was a necessity: "One grim thought had ruled the American decision [to contribute to Russia's defense]: that if Russia were defeated quickly and thoroughly, Great Britain, and soon the United States, would be faced with stronger and more confident assailants."¹⁰

Even before the German invasion on June 22, the President had decided to aid Russia.¹¹ American public opinion, however, had to be formulated by the force of the event itself; when it occurred, there was a period of cogitating and examining before the dominant opinion surfaced.¹² The comments written in The New Republic and The Commonwealth after the invasion best illustrate the questions

¹⁰Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 9. Feis's book is a reliable source about this situation and about other diplomatic matters concerning the Big Three leaders. See also Gabriel Kolko, Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945 (New York: Random House, 1970).

¹¹Feis, op. cit., p. 7.

¹²The importance of public opinion and its effect upon State Department action was mentioned by Freda Kirchwey ["Our Aim is to Defeat Hitler; Aid for Russia and Britain," The Nation, CLII (June 28, 1941), 740-741]: "The danger in this country is that our leaders, too sensitive to the general distrust of communism and of the Soviet Union will move slowly, waiting for the popular reaction. But this is no time to sit holding the public pulse. Russia's war

that had to be considered.

One of these questions, or matters to be contemplated before approving aid to Russia, concerned the American Communist Party. The New Republic soon tried to disassociate the Russian need for American aid from any connection to the American Communist Party. Realizing that the American public's attitudes toward Russia were partially influenced by its feelings about communists in the United States, and recognizing that Americans were distrustful of a party which facilely made an about-face in its policies overnight, The New Republic made light of the American Communist Party and maintained that it was not related to the central issue, the plight of the Russian people:

The whirling dervishes of New York or Moscow do not properly speak for the great masses of the Russian people. These have a right to defense against the invader, especially since it is certain as an incidental part of that defense Russia's locked doors will be at least partially opened. In the meantime, one can safely ignore the absurdities of domestic comrades.¹³

In fact, The New Republic was candid about its intention to popularize the notion of sending aid to Russia, and it recognized the American Communist Party as a possible obstacle: "It is hard enough to persuade the American Tories to consent to giving the necessary aid to Russia, without

is democracy's opportunity, perhaps its last one for a long time to come."

¹³"Flip Flop," The New Republic, CIV (June 30, 1941), 877.

the task made harder by antics of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. such as not even a mother could love."¹⁴

The "antics" of the American communists also elicited comment from The Commonwealth; it discounted any influence that the Party would have with the general American populace. The periodical maintained, however, that the Party's support for the war would have a beneficial effect upon the American labor situation, for, during the time that Russia and Germany were allied, American communists hindered American involvement in the war by inciting strikes on national defense projects. With the certainty that American products would not be used to the detriment of the Soviet Union, these communist-inspired strikes would stop, and any further strikes which occurred could be assumed to be for legitimate American labor demands.¹⁵

The statements and actions of American communists ultimately had little effect upon America's concern for the Russian war effort. What was more perplexing to Americans was the fact that they had long identified the Soviet Union as being a godless society. To those who advocated embracing Russia as an ally against Hitler, The Commonwealth replied:

¹⁴"Party Zigzag," ibid., CV (July 7, 1941), 4. For other articles about the American Communist Party, see "Re-shuffle," ibid. (July 7, 1941), p. 20; and "A Purge for American Reds," ibid. (July 14, 1941), p. 37.

¹⁵"If There are Strikes," The Commonwealth, XXXIV (July 4, 1941), 244.

For of what is Hitler a leader and a symbol? First of all a spiritual force antagonistic to sound philosophy and to religion and Christianity. Secondly, an historical trend involving military, political, economic and all sorts of social tendencies and choices. In the spiritual war, Stalin is no ally. In the struggle against totalitarian social forces, communism is in the camp of the enemy.¹⁶

The New Republic recognized early that the religious question might be a decisive factor in whether or not America would give aid to Russia:

The attitude of the Catholic Church probably will have an important influence on the President's final decision [about how much aid to give to Russia]. Depending as he always has, on political support from metropolitan populations, which are heavily Catholic, the President is sensitive to Church opinion. The Vatican and responsible leaders of the Catholic clergy in this country were engaged in a vigorous and telling anti-Nazi campaign when news of the German declaration of war on Russia broke. Whether this campaign will be discontinued and the great influence of the Church shifted now that Hitler is fighting anti-church Russia is not yet clear.¹⁷

The Nation discounted the importance of Russia's religious situation. Its writers consistently argued that

¹⁶"Defend America by..." ibid. (July 25, 1941), p. 317. For an identical viewpoint, see "Shall We Fight for Russia?" The Christian Century, LVIII (September 10, 1941), 1104-1105.

¹⁷"Washington Notes," The New Republic, CV (July 4, 1941), 20. Later the President evidently attempted to counter this potential Catholic opposition by implying that the Soviets shared the American regard for religious freedom. (President Roosevelt said that the Soviet constitution guaranteed freedom of religion.) The New York Times declared that such an attempt to justify aid to Russia was unnecessary and unrelated to the central military necessity. See "On Idealizing Russia," New York Times, October 2, 1941, 24.

the defeat of Hitler was the primary consideration for giving aid to Russia:

Russia, we are told, is not a Christian state. Neither is China. Neither is India. Most of the world is non-Christian. The conquest of Russia by Germany would not make Russia more Christian. It would only make it more dangerous.¹⁸

In answer to American Catholics who questioned the wisdom of giving aid to a country which lacked religious liberty, The New Republic pointed out that the Church in pre-Revolutionary Russia was rich, unprogressive and involved in counter-revolutionary plots. The magazine declared that more important than the religious issue was the fact that Russia had lost more than one million men in the war; this sacrifice outweighed other considerations:

Common decency would suggest that criticism might well be limited at present to those who have made a comparable effort; common sense would prevent us from endangering our own safety by letting such fantastic [religious] stipulations stand in the way of maximum effort.¹⁹

Gradually, less emphasis was placed upon the importance of the religious compatibility of the United States and Russia, for Americans began to differentiate between the Russian people and the Soviet government. In an article, "Religion in Russia: Red Godlessness Fails to Empty Churches, Life's reporter concluded: "As a people the Russians are

¹⁸ Norman Angell, "The Western Nations Should Help Russia," The Nation, CLII (June 28, 1941), 744.

¹⁹ "Religion in Russia," The New Republic, CV (October 13, 1941), 455.

the most mystically religious on earth."²⁰ A writer for The Commonweal concurred with that observation and further pointed out America's duty in relation to Russia: "The soul of the Russian people has remained free from atheist teaching; Russia must be freed from the communist menace as well as the nazi menace."²¹

After the auxiliary issues (American Communist Party, Russia's religious situation, etc.) were discussed and dismissed, the journals debated a more crucial matter, the extent of U. S. involvement in Russia's war effort.

For The New Republic the war, after the invasion of Russia, immediately became a "life-and-death war between nazism and the rest of the world," and the journal strongly advocated that the United States, in the interests of its own defense, should go to war at once against Germany.²² The New Republic also recommended giving prompt and substantial aid to the Soviet Union: "In our own interest we must, like Mr. Churchill, agree that the enemy of our enemy becomes our friend."²³

²⁰Life, XI (October 13, 1941), 110.

²¹Helen Iswolsky, "The Orthodox Church and the War," The Commonweal, XXXIV (October 17, 1941), 608.

²²"One Day That Shook the World," The New Republic, CIV (June 30, 1941), 872.

²³Ibid. The Nation shared this viewpoint. See Louis Fischer, "Hitler Marches East," CLII (June 28, 1941), 743-744; I. F. Stone, "Speed Lend-Lease Aid," ibid. (September 27, 1941), pp. 269-270; and Norman Angell, "The Western Nations Should Help Russia," op. cit.

The Commonweal reluctantly concurred that America should aid the enemies of nazism, even if one of the foes was Soviet Russia, but the magazine did not agree that American entrance into the war was necessary:

Nor can we see in this new monstrous outbreak any valid argument for leaping now and in total fashion into the existing complex of war, as some of the all-outers are hectically urging. Using the Soviet war as an argument for such a policy is very cynical toward that old crusade of white versus black, the four freedoms versus dictatorship, etc.²⁴

The New Republic recognized that the United States was not yet willing to enter the war, so the magazine emphasized instead the necessity of giving aid to Russia on the grounds that American defense would be served: "What the strategy of opportunistic defense now calls for is aid to Russia."²⁵ One of the magazine's readers expressed the same attitude:

American public opinion will support bold, decisive, essential belligerent moves to check Hitler. It is not ready for a formal declaration of war. Therefore, more possible aid to Britain, to China and the Soviet Union. Be realistic--and be quick--about including Russia. Exported guns and planes, fired and flown

²⁴"The Order of Belligerence," The Commonweal, XXXIV (July 4, 1941), 244. This viewpoint was shared by the New York Times. See "Hitler Invades Russia," June 23, 1941, p. 16. Believing that the United States ought to "seize boldly the opportunity to increase Hitler's difficulty at the very moment he has risked war simultaneously on two fronts," the newspaper advocated giving aid to Hitler's enemies, principally Britain, but not the American entrance into the war. See also "Shall We Fight for Russia?" The Christian Century, op. cit.

²⁵"The Strategy of Defence," The New Republic, CV (September 1, 1941), 277.

immediately, may help to stop the Axis onslaught before it reaches our shores.²⁶

Fully realizing the value of a favorable American public opinion in supporting a cause, The New Republic used various persuasive techniques to hasten American commitment to the Russian war effort. The magazine appealed to American competitive spirit and tried to cajole Americans into action:

The Russians, in spite of everything, have found in their miserable and backward land, so lacking in pink and blue bathrooms, something for which they are willing to fight to the end. It is hard to believe that our people, who have so much more to defend, will not at least be equally vigorous in defending it.²⁷

The journal also implied that Americans should feel guilt-ridden for having done nothing in the struggle against Germany:

Above all, we must eradicate the attitude of mind which still persists in feeling that, because we don't like communism, we can stand by unmoved and see Russia destroyed by Germany. Hitler's whole

²⁶ "Correspondence," ibid., p. 281.

²⁷ Bruce Blivens, "Russia's Morale--And Ours," ibid., p. 271. Mr. Blivens' lament about the pathetic conditions in that "miserable and backward land" is somewhat amusing when one considers the account that Wendell Willkie gave of his visit to Russia the following year. While Mr. Willkie did not mention any pink and blue bathrooms, he did say that he was much impressed with the vast and productive land and with the progressive agricultural and industrial systems he encountered. See Wendell Willkie, "Our Ally, Russia," in Prefaces to Peace (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1943), pp. 44-68.

success has come because his enemies did not see in time that theirs was a common cause.²⁸

Finally, it is interesting that The New Republic suggested that American efforts to defeat communism would be served by giving aid to Soviet Russia:

But suppose America and England withheld the aid, and Russia, by a miracle that is not at all impossible, could wear down the Nazi army. . . . Imagine the enormous prestige that Stalin and communism would then acquire. We should be told, and with the appearance of plausibility, that the shining sword of the USSR had proved that her people and her system were superior to all others. If you are opposed to communism, you had better work to establish the moral credit of democracy while the page is still blank.²⁹

While the comments in The New Republic were variations on a theme (give aid to Russia), The Commonweal had some reservations about involvement with the Soviet Union. First, the Catholic magazine saw no clear distinction between communist Russia and nazi Germany, between the dictator Stalin and the tyrant Hitler.³⁰ Second, it questioned the long-range benefits of helping Russia defeat Germany.³¹

²⁸ "Russia is our Ally," The New Republic, CV (September 29, 1941), 39.

²⁹ "On Aiding Red Russia," ibid. (September 22, 1941), p. 285.

³⁰ "Russia and the War," The Commonweal, XXXIV (July 18, 1941), 293.

³¹ Ibid. When Henry Nelson Wieman suggested in an article in The Christian Century that the U.S. should end Russian suspicion of America by helping Russia, seven readers wrote letters of protest. See "Join Russia in the War," LVIII (August 13, 1941), 1002-1004; and "Correspondence," (August 27, 1941), 1055-1056; (September 10, 1941), 1104-1105; and (September 24, 1941), 1114-1115.

The magazine maintained that a carefully considered policy with definite plans for postwar peace was needed by the United States before it was enmeshed in the conflict.³²

The Commonweal foresaw possible Soviet incompatibility with American ideals after the war was won, and it re-emphasized America's need for a policy that looked beyond the immediate necessity of winning the war:

Increasingly it is demonstrated that the negative purpose of beating Hitler is not an adequate foundation for national policy. Taken as an absolute, it leads to supporting the very evils which constitute the bad part of the nazi tyranny. We can think of as many simple old saws as the next man, but we still can't find a formula of peace terms which we would welcome and which Stalin could also greet with honest favor.³³

Concern for postwar peace solutions did not, however, overshadow The Commonweal's interest in the present war danger. The writers of the magazine acknowledged that Hitler had to be defeated before terms for world peace could be discussed; furthermore they realized that, since Russia was effectively working for the defeat of Germany, her efforts could only be appreciated by the United States.³⁴ And, The Commonweal ultimately decided that working with Russia in the struggle against Germany might

³²"Russia and the War," op. cit.

³³"Defend America By...", op. cit.

³⁴"Russian Participation," The Commonweal, XXXIV (August 8, 1941), 363.

give America the opportunity to influence the postwar aims of Russia.³⁵

By the end of 1941, of course, America also was at war with Russia's enemy. But, even before the U.S. entry into the war, Americans had developed a definite sympathy for the Russian cause. It is worth noting here, however, that this pro-Russian attitude was accompanied by a concern about what Russia future aims might be. Americans' suspicions about Russia's possible postwar demands were not completely forgotten during the preparations for the battle against the Axis.³⁶

1942

After America entered the war, the matter of a Russian-American alliance was no longer open to debate. In 1942, Russia valiantly faced a major German campaign, and the vast majority of Americans began to appreciate Russia as an ally. In fact, if one were to try to fix a particular year in which Americans most certainly accepted Russia as a kindred spirit, 1942 would probably be that year.

³⁵"Russian Participation--II," ibid. (August 15, 1941), p. 387.

³⁶Two American journalists who had lived in Russia consistently urged Americans to consider any dealings with the Soviet Union with extreme caution. See Eugene Lyons, "The State of the Union: Some Plain Talk about Russia," The American Mercury, LIII (November, 1941), 583-589; and two articles by William H. Chamberlin, "Stalin in the War," Yale Review, N.S. III (March, 1941), 483-498, and "Russia, the Sprawling Giant," New York Times Magazine, July 6, 1941, pp. 4-5.

Near the end of the year, in an editorial in the New York Times, this kinship was most aptly expressed:

We think the whole democratic world, setting aside differences of opinion as to strategy, is willing to say to Mr. Stalin and his people that never in all history, certainly never during the past quarter of a century, has Russia stood so high in the respect and admiration of the free nations. The Russians are our comrades in battle. The memory of Stalingrad will inspire our soldiers when, at the earliest possible moment, they come to grips with the main masses of the enemy.³⁷

There were no specific news events in 1942 that influenced American attitudes toward Russia; instead, news articles, for the most part, centered upon Russia's continuing struggle against Germany and upon feature-type stories about the Russian army and the Russian people. Editorial comment fell definitely into one of two strains: one urged caution and restraint, warning that Americans' naive conception of Russia might lead to future difficulties; the other demanded a strong, unhesitating commitment to the partnership with Russia and attempted to dispel apprehensions about Russia which might hinder this commitment.

The reports of Life magazine were illustrative of the dominant American attitude, that of enthusiastic acceptance of Russia. Impressed with the visible Russian contribution to the defeat of Hitler, Life did not delve into soul-searching moral questions regarding Russia; instead,

³⁷ "Russia After 25 Years," New York Times, November 7, 1942, p. 14.

it reported superficial but interesting items of news, such as "The German Army Executed Five Brave Young Russians for not Being in Uniform," and "England Falls in Love with Russia" (one illustration of this point was a sign with the message: "Quiet Night--Thanks to Russia"). Life's sympathy for Russia continued to be evident in its choice of subject matter and descriptive phrases: "Russian Parents Lament Dead Son at Scene of German Execution," "Great Russian Army Fights On," and "Murder Without Passion is Nazi Method with Russian Civilians."³⁸ In other American magazines, there were many articles about the Russian army, its hardships and its superb showing against the Germans;³⁹ other stories gave details of the Russian people's bravery and high morale and its sacrifices for the war effort.⁴⁰

³⁸Life, XII (May 16, 1942), 52; (April 20, 1942), 25-27; (May 4, 1942), 29; (May 11, 1942), 15; (June 29, 1942), 34.

³⁹See Freda Kirchwey, "Stalingrad and Dieppe," The Nation, CLIV (February 7, 1942), 254; "Man Who Stopped Hitler: The Soviet Soldier, a New Type of Russian," New York Times Magazine, March 8, 1942, p. 3; "Mud and Floods," Newsweek, XIX (April 13, 1942), 19; "No More Commissars," Time, XL (October 19, 1942), 23; "Red Medicine: Report on Russian Military Medicine," Time, XL (November 23, 1942), 70-71; and "Triumphant Milepost," Newsweek, XIX (March 2, 1942), 18-19.

⁴⁰See Edgar Snow, "These are the People of Russia," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (December 12, 1942), 14-15+; "Let Us Live!" Time, XL (December 7, 1942), 37-38; Maurice Hindus, "Report on Russia: New Russia Emerges from the Life and Death Struggle with the Enemy," The Reader's Digest, XLI (November, 1942), 90-92; C. C. Sulzberger, "Report on Russia and the Russians," New York Times Magazine, March 29, 1942, pp. 3-4; Joseph E. Davies, "What We Didn't Know about Russia," The Reader's Digest, XL (March, 1942), 45-50; and "Peasant and His Land," Time, XL (July 27, 1942), 20.

The American public was sympathetic to Russia and was generous in its subsequent actions. Numerous accounts in the New York Times outline individual and group efforts to aid Russia. Members of one union donated medical instruments, and another union presented X-ray and surgical equipment to be sent to the Russian army. Two union groups contributed to funds for weapons; one drive raised money for a tank fund, the other was designated for tanks and bombers. Even race track patrons were among the contributors interested in Russia's defense. Physicians in the greater New York area, moreover, gave a dinner benefiting the Russian War Relief Fund. New York's Mayor La Guardia designated June 21 as the beginning of "Russian War Relief Week," and 31 cities proclaimed June 22 as "Aid to Russia Day." Some of the activities organized for the purpose of raising money to help Russia were pin sales, cook book sales, seed funds, cartoon benefits, Madison Square Garden rallies, dance festivals, concerts, dramatic performances, cocktail parties, luncheons, style shows, and bazaars. The public also contributed to funds set up by the United Jewish War Effort and the National Community Chest. Russia continued to be remembered later in the year when many prominent Americans, including the President, sent messages of congratulations on the 25th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, and La Guardia designated November 8 as

"Stalingrad Day."⁴¹

This open-hearted American espousal of Russia's war cause distressed several commentators. One writer warned Americans against being so enthusiastic in their sympathy for Russia; she feared that they would make assumptions based merely on their feelings:

We have to remember: our sympathy is with what the Russians are doing right now. . . . [Many people] open to the new "allies" not only their tax-paying purses, but their hearts, which is a much more serious matter. . . . When the Russians joined the team of the United Nations, the Americans gave them the benefit of the doubt. They were glad to see that the bravery of the Russians justified their confidence and their friendship. But they don't know their partner beyond the military bulletins.⁴²

The writer continued with the observation that, because Americans like fair play, they assume that everyone they like plays fairly. She said that examples of Russian treatment of the Poles, however, indicated that the Russian occupation of Poland had been just as ruthless and brutal as the nazi occupation:

Russian occupation of Poland was the best possible propaganda against communism. The United Nations

⁴¹This summary of American activities for the benefit of Russia might be extended. Accounts of bazaars, luncheons, etc. make a substantial portion of the minor news items in the 1942 issues of the New York Times, from which this information is taken. For a single article which gives similar information, see Lois Miller, "From John Doe to the Russian Front: Russian War Relief, USA," The Reader's Digest, XL (May, 1942), 122-124.

⁴²Marta Wankowicz, "In Russia...It's Colder," The Commonweal, XXXVI (September 4, 1942), 462.

should not forget that the Poles found the only difference between nazi Germany and Soviet Russia to be, "In Russia...it's colder."⁴³

William H. Chamberlin pointed out other possible American misconceptions that hindered a realistic appraisal of the Soviet Union. He observed that Americans were so impressed by Russian military successes that they assumed goodness on the part of the nation that produced them; this was an example of "the amiable American fallacy that moral excellence is the prerequisite of material success."⁴⁴ Chamberlin also stated that Americans were impressed by the loyalty and enthusiasm of the Russian people and could not believe that a cruel, authoritarian government could inspire such reaction, but he maintained that the Russians were "a people to whom death, sometimes in very horrible forms, has become so familiar [that they] would not shrink from any sacrifice in a struggle for national survival."⁴⁵ Furthermore, Chamberlin warned, the American people should not assume that Russia shared a similar enthusiasm for the "team effort":

Stalin has been waging a thoroughly nationalist war. . . . The idea of a coalition war against Hitler has not been emphasized. And Stalin has been very

⁴³Ibid., 463.

⁴⁴William H. Chamberlin, "The Russian Enigma: An Interpretation," Harper's Magazine, CLXXXV (August, 1942), 227.

⁴⁵Ibid.

uncommunicative on the subject of blue-prints for a new world order.⁴⁶

Concern about America's apparent naiveté was shared by others. An analysis of the process of current American thinking was offered in an article, "John Dewey on Russia," which presented the widely known educator-philosopher's suggestions for realistic guidelines for dealing with Russia:

It seems almost impossible at present for people to hope for a Russian victory and at the same time to be aware of the many undesirable aspects of the Soviet ideology and practice. This is because human beings like to think in terms of what Professor John Dewey has called the Either-Or Philosophy. Men tend to think Either this Or the extreme opposite and to see no intermediate possibilities. . . .

The danger in idealizing Stalin is that in a wave of uncritical enthusiasm the allies of Russia may pay too dearly for Russia's cooperation in the war. . . .

What we need now, Professor Dewey thinks, is a realistic appraisal of "both the war and the peace settlement that will eliminate the dangers inhering in Stalinist supremacy. . . . When Stalin needs our help is the time to start setting these conditions; when we need him more than he needs us is the worst time."⁴⁷

Philip Burnham, a conservative writer for The Commonwealth, agreed that the United States needed a realistic

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 230. Other articles by Chamberlin include "Russia, An American Problem," The Atlantic Monthly, CLXIX (February, 1942), 148-156; "Our Russian Ally," The Christian Century, CIX (August 12, 1942), 976-978; "Meet the Real Litvinoff," The American Mercury, LIV (March, 1942), 273-283; and "Russia as a Partner in War and Peace," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (November 14, 1942), 124+.

⁴⁷ Ruth Byrns, "John Dewey on Russia," The Commonwealth, XXXVI (September 18, 1942), 511, 513.

appraisal of war plans and peace goals, and he emphasized the necessity of knowing exactly what ways American ideals and goals coincided with, and differed from, those of Russia. Complaining that there was a lack of two-way communication with the Russians and that there were practically no American army observers on the Russian fronts, he argued that the United States was foolish to give aid to Russia without any questions asked:

The hard-pressed U.S. cannot afford to let its supplies, its forces, its world position be used for those Soviet war aims which are not ours and which may well be at some points antagonistic to ours.⁴⁸

Burnham also criticized the American government for a short-sighted propaganda campaign, one which was so designed to endear Americans to Russia that they could not realize the differences between the two countries:

There has been a concerted effort to "sell" the Soviets to the public. The technique has not been to isolate the real differences and deal with them item by item frankly with the Russians and with the people here. Rather, big guns have been turned on the propaganda field, firing away to obliterate the idea that the U.S. has serious differences with Russia and the Communist International. Hopkins, Davies, Harriman, the President himself and a host of others have been encouraging the impression that the Stalin regime is something like a combination of Washington's, Jefferson's and Lincoln's, and functioning under a similar constitution. Pressure, probably informal and private and brought on by the miasmic atmosphere which hush-hushing the problem engenders, has halted the publication of

⁴⁸ Philip Burnham, "Russia as an Ally," *ibid.*, XXXV (February 6, 1942), 382. See also H. F. Ward, "Is Russia Forsaking Communism?" The Christian Century, CIX (October 28, 1942), 1314-1316.

books and articles which picture the communists in a less flattering if more realistic light.⁴⁹

What Burnham advocated was a more honest and direct approach in dealing with our Russian ally:

The problem of Russia as an ally is not simply the problem of beating Hitler. The government has taken up the difficult job of cooperating with Russia to beat Hitler, without furnishing Russia the power and opportunity to ruin us on their own account as they pursue their own goals of world-wide communism. . . . Let us make it [honest and frank dealing] our path, and with humility show what we are trying to do, so that Russia may know and may be persuaded to join in the work of clearing out the road toward the peace with justice we must want as our goal. . . . You cannot go round suspicion; you have to cut through it.⁵⁰

The concern of Burnham, Chamberlin and others about America's indiscriminate adoption of Russia as ally and friend cannot be discounted, for it reflected an underlying distrust of communism. The liberal professor, Max Lerner, and others attempted to counter this criticism. The Russian reluctance to share military secrets with its allies might, Lerner maintained, be understandable in view of other pertinent factors:

Our army leaders complain that the Russian military is secretive about its strength and preparations and plans. But in the face of the fact that our own military plans leaked out in our isolationist press just before Pearl Harbor, and that even some of the War Department staff needed ever more peremptory orders from the President before carrying out his directives for lend-lease aid to Russia,

⁴⁹Burnham, op. cit., p. 383.

⁵⁰Ibid.

One cannot be wholly shocked by the Russian secretiveness.⁵¹

By brief comparison, Lerner also tried to de-emphasize the danger of Russia:

It has often been pointed out, but needs underlining again, that a quarter century of a revolutionary Russian regime has not forced either America or England to add one soldier to its armed forces, while less than a decade of Hitlerism has compelled England to build an air force that operates in four-figure flotillas, and America to undertake the vastest armament program in world history.⁵²

The New Republic also underplayed the possibility of a Russian threat. In fact, the magazine was optimistic about the recent Russian-British twenty-year treaty and its apparent consolidation of postwar goals.⁵³ The New Republic stated that a major difficulty in American coordination of its war activities and postwar plans with those of Russia was uncertainty about Russia's ultimate plans after victory, but the periodical confidently predicted that Russia's treaty with Britain would allay suspicion on both sides. De-emphasizing the stated communist desire for world revolution, The New Republic said that action by the Soviet

⁵¹Max Lerner, "Russia and the Future," The Atlantic Monthly, CLXXXV (November, 1942), 83. See a similar article by Ralph Bates, "Need We Fear Russia?" in The Nation, CLIV (January 17, 1942), 60-62.

⁵²Lerner, op. cit., p. 82. See Freda Kirchwey, "Russia and the Future," The Nation, CLIV (June 20, 1942), 701.

⁵³See "Russia in the Alliance," The New Republic, CVI (June 22, 1942), 843-844; and "Russian Hopes Turn Westward in Deals with the Democracies," Newsweek, XIX (June 22, 1942), 17-18.

Union was unlikely, since the communists' true hopes lay in the predicted collapse of capitalism and the autonomous revolutionary action of populations. This communist belief should not hinder the Allies' efforts to work with Russia during the war and after:

If the British and Americans believe that with their principles a new order for the common man can be created, they need not fear that Communist hopes of revolution will ever be realized. After all, neither Moscow nor London, but man himself, will in the end everywhere decide what sort of regime he will live in.⁵⁴

In 1942, then, Americans were curious about their new ally, they were impressed by the total Russian war effort, and they responded both officially and personally by sending aid. American journalists viewed this American sympathy for Russia either with dismay or with encouragement, depending upon their overall trust or distrust of the Soviet Union.

1943

America's predominately favorable attitude toward Russia of 1942 did not continue in 1943. Peter G. Filene explains the general reason for the change: "By the beginning of 1943 the tide of battle had turned in both Europe and Asia. The Allies could at last be fairly confident of eventual victory. But as warmaking evolved into peacemaking, frictions within the Alliance intensified."⁵⁵ Filene

⁵⁴"Russia in the Alliance," op. cit., p. 844.

⁵⁵Filene, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

is, of course, looking forward to the series of conferences that were to take place in the following years, but his statement is nevertheless applicable to the gradual increase in Americans' suspicion of Russia that occurred in 1943. During the course of the year, Americans had to consider not only what might occur in the postwar era but also two new events that affected public opinion: Russia's relationship with Poland and the Moscow Conference.

Russia's public standing in America was affected by several actions concerning Poland which came to light in 1943. In January, the Russian government said that it meant to claim permanently its occupied areas of Poland, and in February it referred to Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania as "Russian soil." These revelations certainly caused Americans to ask what further claims Russia would make in the postwar settlement. In February a flurry of American protest accompanied the reports of an execution which Americans concluded to be unjust and unnecessary. Two Polish labor leaders, Henryk Ehrlich and Victor Alter, had been accused of spying against Russia and were executed in December 1941. This news aroused protest from labor unions, the U.S. Socialist party, and a general rally in New York City.⁵⁶ The Commonweal commented upon the extent of

⁵⁶The news of the execution of Ehrlich and Alter and subsequent American reaction was reported in February issues of the New York Times. One year earlier, a reader of The Nation reported the imprisonment of the two men, but

American reaction to this incident and was concerned that negative public opinion might be damaging to American-Russian relations:

The profound antipathy aroused in American non-communist circles most friendly to the Russian political system by the recent announcement of the execution of Alter and Ehrlich is symptomatic [of a situation which is pregnant with danger]. . . . And their execution has had a tremendous political impact in America--an impact far too little noticed.

The significance of this is an access of strength of anti-Russian feeling in this country. This feeling is held in check by the magnificent military achievement of the Russian Army. But it is a deep underlying feeling, and one of which we need to be aware, with which we must try to deal, for it can lead to tragedy.⁵⁷

The New Republic speculated that the two men were not guilty of spying, but the journal underplayed the importance of the incident. Fearing that Americans might seize upon this event as a reason to discontinue aid to Russia, the magazine mentioned similar actions of the United States, Britain and China. This reminder would make Americans reluctant to judge Russia's conduct:

All the chief United Nations have sins on their consciences like the Ehrlich-Alter case. . . . The United States put Mooney and Billings into prison for their beliefs, not their acts; the killing of Sacco and Vanzetti is a lasting stain on our honor.⁵⁸

there was no American reaction at that time. "Letters to the Editor," The Nation, CLIV (January 24, 1942), 104.

⁵⁷"Russia, Politically," The Commonweal, XXXVII (March 26, 1943), 556.

⁵⁸"Helping Soviet Russia," The New Republic, CVIII (April 12, 1943), 460.

An event in April concerning Russia and Poland also was of concern to Americans. The Germans maintained that they had found a number of graves containing bodies of Polish officers that the Russians had killed. When the Polish government, then in exile, demanded a response from the Soviets, Stalin broke off all relations with that government. He therefore left a cloud of mystery over the matter and added one more puzzle to the Russian-Polish situation that had already perplexed Americans.

The Russian reaction to Polish charges and possible ramifications were discussed by many American magazines. All agreed that such action between Poland and Russia revealed disunity and weakness of the United Nations and that the Axis (who brought up the matter in the first place) would greatly benefit from the controversy. An article in The Nation explained why:

If Hitler fought and won the political Battle of Munich, it was because he was fully aware that the democracies would make no real stand. He knew the strength of the revolutionary forces, of the appeasers, of the capitulards in most of the European Cabinets and Foreign Offices. If today Hitler has launched a new political offensive in the international field--whose first result has been the Soviet-Polish break--it is because he sees how the United Nations have been weakened by their lack of a strong, genuinely democratic leadership.⁵⁹

According to Time, the disunity and lack of strong leadership

⁵⁹"Goebbels in Katyn," The Nation, CLVI (May 8, 1943), 670.

within the Allied nations had allowed Russia to make present gains and future stake-outs:

At hand was (1) the worst example yet of what failure to coordinate political aims and understandings with war aims could bring about (2) an object lesson in the lengths to which the USSR could go to compel understanding on its own terms (3) a preview of postwar confusion. . . . The vital fact was that Russia was staking out claims for the peace--and against the possibility of a World War III--that would be difficult to deny. The lesson was that, lacking any definite Anglo-Russian-United States postwar understanding, Premier Joseph Stalin plans to run eastern Europe just about as he pleases.⁶⁰

Most articles stated the belief that the Poles were gallant and patriotic but that they were bunglers when it came to diplomacy. Some suggested that a new constitutional pro-Russian Polish cabinet might be able to work a solution with the Russian officials, while it was doubtful that the present Polish government could.⁶¹ A writer for Current History emphasized the importance of diplomacy in settling the dispute:

The problem is a very serious one, one that may involve Britain and the United States, that will reveal the extent to which they intend to interfere in European affairs. No one can be blind to the fact that Russia is carrying a huge burden in this war, and that she had every right to expect and demand adequate security on her Western front. She will have the military power to secure such

⁶⁰"A Lesson in Manuever," Time, XLI (May 10, 1943), 35-36.

⁶¹See "Russo-Polish Wound," The Nation, CLVI (May 8, 1943), 653; and Charles Thompson, "Poland: Open Rift with Russia," Current History, N.S., IV (May, 1943), 193-194.

territory as she thinks she needs. Only understanding and just diplomacy can settle this dispute.⁶²

Life was also concerned about American-Russian diplomacy. In an editorial, the bases of American foreign policy concerning Russia were outlined. According to Life's editor, the claims of Poland were not sufficient reason to confront Russia about them:

Our alliance with Russia is based on the fact that we have a self-interest in common: the defeat of Germany. Fortunately, we are likely to find other self-interests in common after the war, such as the maintenance of world peace. At very few points, in fact, do our self-interests conflict with Russia's; and the Polish border is not one of them.

Besides self-interest, there is another necessary ingredient of American foreign policy. We should stand for certain principles, such as freedom, democracy and economic progress. . . . We also have a duty to apply our principles through our foreign policy wherever we can. But we must be smart about where they are applicable. In the present dispute, they are not. The Russian Government is a dictatorship; the Polish Government is a shadow of a backward, antidemocratic pre-war regime. Neither state represents freedom and democracy. And since our major self-interest lies with Russia, our diplomats ought not to get too huffy in backing the Poles.⁶³

The Commonweal was critical of Allied diplomacy; because of it, the journal maintained that the border peoples were placed in near-disastrous circumstances:

⁶²Ibid., p. 194.

⁶³"The Soviet-Polish Break," Life, XIV (May 10, 1943), 30. Other articles about the Polish-Russian situation include "Poles Vs. Reds: Allied Unity Put to Test by Row Over Officer Dead," Newsweek, XXI (May 10, 1943), 29; "Row with the Reds," ibid. (May 3, 1943), p. 42.

By taking a do-nothing attitude, the diplomacy of the democracies has blundered, and blundered badly, for now the chances of even a reasonable autonomy for the border peoples are very nearly hopeless. And our unwillingness to grapple with the dichotomy between national sovereignty and security has made it possible for the representatives of these border peoples to blunder themselves into an almost fatally weak bargaining position.⁶⁴

The Commonweal was not, however, wholeheartedly in support of Poland's border claims. In October (prior to the Moscow Conference), the magazine pointed out that the Poles were as guilty of imperialistic designs and religious persecution as the Russians, and it said that a restoration to Poland of the pre-1939 boundaries would not necessarily prevent a return to the pre-1939 state of Polish disunity. The Commonweal then reiterated its previous stand that the Allies would be foolish to make boundary demands that Russia considered politically and militarily impossible. Maintaining that it would be better to make the most just bargain possible concerning the border peoples than to subject them to Russia's wrath (which would be sure to follow idealistic, uncompromising Allied proposals), the magazine projected what it considered to be the only viable solution: a general guarantee of local autonomy for the border territories, coupled with Russian management of their foreign policies and military establishments.⁶⁵

⁶⁴"Russia and Poland," The Commonweal, XXXVIII (May 7, 1943), 63.

⁶⁵"The Frontier Issue," ibid. (October 15, 1943), pp. 626-628. The Commonweal's proposal caused a great deal

A just settlement of the border dispute was one of many postwar problems that concerned Americans in 1943. They began to wonder what Russia wanted for herself in postwar Europe. Journals seemed to agree that Russia wanted security (expanded frontiers and a belt of friendly states joining her frontiers),⁶⁶ avoidance of a cordon sanitaire (a hostile federation of the Slavs, Hungarians, Rumanians

of comment from its readers, most of whom were less compromising. One reader's comments were typical: "It is disconcerting to see people who love America propose that we pay a communist dictator's price for collaboration in the past-war period. . . . Russia may be a great country with brave people, but if that entitles her to the third partition of Poland, then the old Lutheran Kaiser was an angel of light." "Communications," (October 15, 1943), p. 631. Another reader said that discussion of the postwar world was useless, since Russia had already begun to implement her solution. Ibid. For the opinions of other readers, see "The Frontier Issue--Letters," XXXIV (November 5, 1943), 69-70.

⁶⁶One of the most comprehensive articles about the goals of Russia was written by David J. Dallin, a Russian historian and economist and author of Soviet Russia's Foreign Affairs, 1939-1942. See his "Russia's Aims in Europe," The American Mercury, LVII (October, 1943), 391-402. Other articles which dealt with the same subject included C. L. Sulzberger, "What Does Russia Want?" New York Times Magazine, October 31, 1943, p. 10; Demaree Bess, "What Does Russia Want?" The Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (March 20, 1943), 19+; Sidney B. Fay, "What Does Russia Want?" Current History, N.S., V (November, 1943), 199-208.

and Finns),⁶⁷ an undestroyed Germany,⁶⁸ and a full equality of partnership with the United States and Britain in providing for world security.⁶⁹

After considering Russia's postwar goals, Americans weighed the possibility of Russia's making a separate peace with Germany. If Russia sought her own self-interest without regard for her allies, could she not abandon her allies for a profitable peace offer? The New Republic reassured its readers that she would not.⁷⁰ On the other hand, Eugene Lyons said (in an article in The American Mercury) that, based on Russia's previous behavior, it was possible: "The

⁶⁷Both Demaree Bess and David Dallin pointed out Russia's efforts to attract and rally the Slavs. Dallin mentioned several All-Slav meetings held in Moscow (1941-1943) where the emphasis was on national survival under the big-brother protection of Russia; the role of America and Britain was soft-pedalled and Russian friendship was offered as the sole salvation of Slavdom. "Russia's Aims in Europe," op. cit., pp. 395-396. Bess said that "the Slavs today are closer together than ever before, and are looking to Russia for deliverance. . . . As victor in this war, it is therefore inevitable that Russia will exert more influence in all these countries than the Anglo-American combination can hope to wield." "What Does Russia Want?" op. cit., p. 91.

⁶⁸Sidney Fay ["What About Post-War Germany?" Current History, N.S., IV (April, 1943), 98-99] and C. L. Sulzberger ["What Does Russia Want?" op. cit., p. 10] said that it was unlikely that Russia would attempt communization of Germany. Essentially, they agreed with Dallin that post Russia would fare better if Germany's industry and resources were not destroyed.

⁶⁹All of the above articles agreed that there was no question that Russia's role in the war, active and essential, would guarantee her a major voice in settling the peace.

⁷⁰"Helping Soviet Russia," The New Republic, CVIII (April 12, 1943), 460; and "The Russian Rift," ibid., CIX (September 6, 1943), 322.

most generous appraisal of the Stalin-Hitler deal of August 1939 is that Russia feared a doublecross and beat the Western Powers to it. If it is true that Stalin still fears a doublecross, then the danger that he may again 'steal a march' on his present allies cannot be wished away."⁷¹

At a time when American conservatives were urging caution in dealing with Russia, Stalin dissolved the Comintern. Although this act was generally hailed as proof of Russia's good intentions,⁷² some writers' suspicions were even further aroused:

It should be stressed that the much-advertised "dissolution" of the Comintern--self-styled "General Staff of the World Revolution"--was not such a move toward closer collaboration. There is plenty of evidence that the mere "dissolution" of a Soviet organization does not mean anything. The Cheka was "dissolved" when its name became infamous, and the GPU took over; the GPU was "dissolved" when it became infamous, and the NKVD took over; yet the same regime of police terror continued unchanged. . . . Earl Browder himself, chief of the American communists, in his official statement on the "dissolution," said that it is of "no immediate concern" to his followers. He pointed out that his party resigned from the Comintern three years ago--and we need only add that, since then, as before

⁷¹Eugene Lyons, "Soviet Foreign Policies," The American Mercury, LVI (March, 1943), 370.

⁷²See "Soviet's End to Comintern Tightens Ties to Allies," Newsweek, XXI (May 31, 1943), 48; "Dissolution of a Spectre," Time, XLI (May 31, 1943), 23-24; and "Why Did Stalin Do It?" The Nation, CLVI (June 5, 1943), 808-809.

his party has followed the Moscow party line as deftly as the thread follows the needle.⁷³

American reactions were similar when Stalin removed restrictions on the church in Russia and when he allowed the election of a new patriarch. Some writers felt that these actions were indicative of a change of policy and a trend toward better relations with the democracies;⁷⁴ others said that they were merely moves intended for propaganda value, and they predicted that no real changes would occur.⁷⁵

American opinions were less divided when the National Committee of Free Germany issued a manifesto in Moscow. This group was composed of captured German prisoners, and they appealed to the German masses to overthrow Hitler by revolution; such an action, according to them, would forestall a defeat by coalition armies, a destruction of national

⁷³ Max Eastman, "To Collaborate Successfully, We Must Face the Facts About Russia," The Reader's Digest, XLIII (July, 1943), 11-12. See also "Comintern's Work Is Done," The Christian Century, LX (June 2, 1943), 655-656.

⁷⁴ See "Break-through: Official Restoration of the Russian Orthodox Church," Time, XLII (December 27, 1943), 53-54; "Kyrie Eleison," ibid. (September 13, 1943), p. 45; Sir Bernard Pares, "Religion in Russia," Foreign Affairs, XXI (July, 1943), 635-644; and "McMahon's Mission," News-week, XXII (July 12, 1943), 68. This last article is about a Catholic laymen's organization, Catholic Association for International Peace, which urged greater American cooperation with Russia.

⁷⁵ "Stalin to Permit Election of Head of Church," The Christian Century, LX (September 15, 1943), 1029. See also "Restoration of the Russian Church," ibid. (September 29, 1943), p. 1093.

independence, a dismemberment of Germany, and a treaty harsher than the Treaty of Versailles. Since this action was evidently sanctioned by Stalin, Americans were distressed; it indicated a lack of unity between Stalin and Roosevelt and Churchill (who at that time were calling for "unconditional surrender").⁷⁶

The matter of Russia's potential postwar cooperation with the democracies was the subject of opinion polls several times during 1943. In a Fortune poll 80 per cent of Americans agreed that the United States should work with Russia in fighting the war and working out the peace, but almost half believed that Russia would make demands that the United States could not agree to.⁷⁷ Forty per cent thought that Russia would try to bring about communist governments in other European countries; 46 per cent of "well-informed" Americans agreed (the question was asked of the general American populace and also of those whom the pollsters considered to be well-informed).⁷⁸ In a later poll

⁷⁶See "Peace Terms, Moscow Version," Time, XLII (August 30, 1943), 24; "East Wind: From Moscow a Major Political Offensive," ibid. (August 2, 1943), p. 28; "Russia's Foreign Policy: Soviet Leaders Chart Two Courses: One of Collaboration, the Other of Lone Action," Life, XV (October 18, 1943), 36, and Ernest K. Lindley, "Russian Policy and the German Manifesto," Newsweek, XXII (August 2, 1943), 38.

⁷⁷"Fortune Survey: Hand Is Out to Russia," Fortune, XXVII (June, 1943), 22.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 26.

conducted by George Gallup, almost two-thirds of Americans wanted to be uncommitted to Russia after the war. To the question "Should the U.S. and Russia . . . agree to come to each other's defense immediately if the other is attacked at any future time," 39 per cent said yes, 37 per cent said no, and 24 per cent were undecided.⁷⁹ These polls indicate that Americans thought that the United States should definitely collaborate with Russia in war and peace and also that Americans were not overwhelmingly convinced that Russia would be an easy ally to deal with after the war.

Evidently many Americans felt that the United States should wholeheartedly support the Soviet Union, and they set out to achieve this goal. Joseph E. Davies, former Ambassador to Russia, encouraged such an idea in an address to the nation's governors:

It is neither sensible, wise nor right to encourage criticism of the good faith of the Soviet Government, or attacks on its leaders. . . . To you, Governors of our great Commonwealth, whom I know to be all lovers of peace and great Americans, I know that I can address with confidence the thought that we should all join in a constructive effort to create a public opinion, at this critical time, when both the war and the future peace is in jeopardy, which would fortify our confidence in our Allies, and their confidence in us.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Public Opinion Quarterly, VII (Winter, 1943-1944), 759.

⁸⁰Joseph E. Davies, "Russia Today," Vital Speeches, IX (August 1, 1943), 640.

Writers in several magazines expressed concern that a negative American attitude about Russia could hinder future relations with that country. Karl Polanyi, in Harper's Magazine, said: "To try to isolate Russia, to refuse to co-operate with her, to insinuate that she is the enemy, means simply to force her into a world-revolutionary strategy against her will."⁸¹ This point of view was similar to that of The Commonweal: "We may be sure that an atmosphere of distrust can have only one result--to force Russia to enlarge her claims when the war is over."⁸² With similar sentiments, The New Republic indignantly criticized American magazines which were critical of Russia:

We do know that Hitler's last remaining hope is to sow doubt, suspicion, and dissent among the Allies. In view of that, it is nothing short of criminal for American periodicals to attack and abuse Russia as they do, speculating freely that she is about to make a separate peace with Germany, or that it is making impossible demands regarding Europe in the postwar era.⁸³

The journal also condemned the ambivalent feelings of Americans who admired Russia's strength against Germany and yet feared such strength in postwar Europe: "We feel that such fears are unjustified as well as ungenerous on the part of Americans whose very survival has been assured by the Russian victories."⁸⁴

⁸¹Karl Polanyi, "Why Make Russia Run Amok?" Harper's Magazine, CLXXXVI (March, 1943), 409.

⁸²"The Progress of Russian Arms," The Commonweal, XXXVII (February 19, 1943), 435.

⁸³"Russophobes in America," The New Republic, CIX (August 30, 1943), 267.

⁸⁴"No Cause for Alarmism," ibid., CVIII (February 22, 1943), 236.

Other magazines took a more positive method in trying to generate a positive American attitude toward Russia; they emphasized the attractive elements of Russia. Life's editors explained why they devoted an entire issue to the "Works and Manners of the Russian People":

There are two ways by which nations can come closer together; one is through their State Departments, the other is through popular sympathy and understanding. The editors of Life can't do anything about the U.S. State Department. We can, however, help our readers to see and understand the Russian people. . . . When we take account of what the USSR has accomplished in twenty years of its existence, we can make allowances for certain shortcomings, however deplorable.⁸⁵

Articles in other magazines helped Americans to become better acquainted with the Russian people. Some lauded the Russian army: "Comrades in Epaulets,"⁸⁶ "Red's Tough Generals,"⁸⁷ "Red Army,"⁸⁸ "What Kind of Man Is a Russian General?"⁸⁹ Other articles stressed factors about the Russian people which would endear them to Americans: "The Price That Russia Is Paying,"⁹⁰ "Life on the Russian Front,"⁹¹

⁸⁵Life, XIV (March 29, 1943), 13.

⁸⁶Newsweek, XXI (February 15, 1943), 21.

⁸⁷Ibid. (February 8, 1943), pp. 23-25.

⁸⁸Ibid. (March 1, 1943), pp. 19-21.

⁸⁹Edgar Snow, The Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (April 17, 1943), 20-27.

⁹⁰Maurice Hindus, The Reader's Digest, XLII (April, 1943), 47-50.

⁹¹Wendell Willkie, ibid. (March, 1943), pp. 1-7.

"Russia Is Changing: Wartime Poetry, Novels and Plays Provide Proof,"⁹² "Asia Saved Our Bacon: What the Russo-Asiatic Peoples Have Meant to Us."⁹³

Some Americans resented such attempts to "sell" the public an attractive Soviet Union. The editors of Fortune claimed that such action was unnecessary, since the American people already desired close cooperation with Russia.⁹⁴ Their estimation was probably correct, insofar as the American public's having concern and sympathy for the Russian people. An example of American response to a people-to-people appeal was mentioned in Time: when the Russian War Relief Committee asked Americans to write letters to Russians whom they would have something in common with (farmers write to farmers, etc.), 1,200,000 Americans complied.⁹⁵

According to the polls, however, Americans did distrust the Soviet government, especially in regard to post-war claims and demands.⁹⁶ When there appeared to be a concerted effort by the government and by prominent individuals

⁹²Vera Alexandrova, The American Mercury, LVI (March, 1943), 311-318.

⁹³Edgar Snow, The Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (February 27, 1943), 9-10.

⁹⁴"Government by Horse Sense: Selling the People on Russia," Fortune, XXVII (June, 1943), 128.

⁹⁵"Dear Red: American Letters to Russians With Similar Interests," Time, XLII (June 14, 1943), 25.

⁹⁶See above, pages 62-63.

to change this attitude, many commentators spoke out indignantly. Some questioned why such propaganda was necessary:

Winston Churchill and Stalin don't get along. Uncle Joe is quite bitter toward Churchill. Yet the relations between Great Britain and Russia are very much better than ours with Russia. The reason is that, thanks to Churchill, the British people are on a realistic and not a sentimental basis toward Russia.

In less than twenty-four hours after Germany attacked Russia in June of 1941, Churchill told his people what the score was. Churchill said he had fought communism for twenty-five years and took back nothing that he had said. He said Nazism was indistinguishable from the worst features of communism. But Churchill said he would help anybody that was fighting the Nazis.

Why not stand on that?⁹⁷

Others pointed out that the Russians were not reciprocating such consideration:

Soviet spokesmen make no attempt to "sell" America's way of life to their people, or to reinterpret our system of free enterprise to make it more palatable. They set up no organizations of "friends of the United States." They do not celebrate our national holiday, or make films to glorify our ideology [Warner Brothers produced a film based on Joseph E. Davies' pro-Russian book Mission to Moscow], or call mass meetings to extol our victories in Guadalcanal and North Africa.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Eugene Lyons, "Cooperating with Russia," The American Mercury, LVI (May, 1943), 539.

⁹⁸ Max Eastman, "To Collaborate Successfully--We Must Face the Facts about Russia," op. cit., p. 5. Eugene Lyons said that in contrast to the lack of Soviet gestures of friendship to America, after the Stalin-Hitler pact, Russia demonstrated her cordial feelings to Germany by reviving German music, exhibiting displays of German culture and encouraging editorial tributes to German-Russian friendship. See "Cooperating with Russia," op. cit., p. 543.

Some writers argued that Stalin was not influenced by American public opinion: "'Public opinion,' that vague essence which controls so much of British and United States behavior, is of no interest to Russia."⁹⁹ Moreover, he would only regard efforts to change it with contempt:

The chances of durable cooperation would be far greater if we followed Stalin's lead and foreswore sentimental make-believe. . . . The Kremlin leaders are neither impressed nor placated by our "romantic" performance. As realists and economic determinists, they have acted and will continue to act in line with Russia's self-interest. They will continue to have only contempt for transparent flattery and inept propaganda.¹⁰⁰

Finally, some Americans objected to the "please-be-polite-to-our-gallant allies" propaganda because it undermined America's own interests:

There are those who say "this is not the time" to speak out against Communism. But this is precisely the time that Communism is planning its own New Order, and if we wait until their plans are complete, our plans will not so much as have a "look-in."¹⁰¹

At a time when there was dissatisfaction with the apparent lack of clear-cut American plans for postwar problems and a realization that Russia (who evidently did have postwar plans to implement) would have an important voice in determining the world situation after the war, an event

⁹⁹"The Soviet-Polish Break," Life, XIV (May 10, 1943), 30.

¹⁰⁰Eugene Lyons, "Progress of Stalin Worship," The American Mercury, LVI (June, 1943), 695.

¹⁰¹James M. Gillis, "No Alliance with Atheism," The Catholic World, CLVI (January, 1943), 392.

occurred which encouraged Americans and strengthened the relationship between America and Russia. It was the Moscow Conference, a meeting of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and Soviet Foreign Commissar V. M. Molotov in October, 1943.

The reports following the conference were highly optimistic. The New Republic maintained that no one country made undue concessions and that all participants were "winners":

The real victors were all concerned, as representatives of the anti-Nazi and peace-loving world. Inexorable forces compelled the delegates to place above all else the common fate of their nations, the need of cementing their unity now and continuing it in the future, and the desirability of a general world organization. In accepting this necessity nobody made a sacrifice of his true interest; the only losers are the enemies of humanity.¹⁰²

The Commonweal, also enthusiastic, said that "it is even conceivable that the question of [Russia's] Western boundaries could be solved in a fashion to satisfy all consciences."¹⁰³

This enthusiasm was even echoed at higher levels. Herbert Feis, who recorded the events at a later day, points out that Secretary of State Hull was happy that the Russians

¹⁰²"Who Won the Conference?" The New Republic, CIX (November 15, 1943), 671. See also "Signing of Moscow Pact: November 1 Climaxes Fortnight of Friendly Deliberation," Life, XV (November 22, 1943), 28-29; and "Mold of History," Time, XLII (October 18, 1943), 26-28.

¹⁰³"The Four-Power Pact," The Commonweal, XXXIX (November 12, 1943), 84.

postponed the matter of postwar frontiers; Feis also says:

Roosevelt and Churchill, while not being carried away, were much impressed by the outcome of the meeting. The President--without any reference to the item which probably pleased him most, the Soviet promise to enter the Pacific war--described the Conference as a "tremendous success." "When this thing started," he went on, "there were a great many cynics who said 'Oh, they will all agree to disagree,' and 'there will be a lot of suspicion and they won't get anywhere.' But the spirit of the whole Conference has been amazingly good. I think that Mr. Hull deserves a great deal of credit for that spirit, and I think the Russians and the British deserve equal credit. It has been--what we called in the old days in the Navy--a 'happy ship.'"¹⁰⁴

Americans were probably even more convinced about Russia's good intentions following the reports about the secret Cairo and Teheran conferences. In his December 24 Fireside Chat about the conferences, President Roosevelt said:

We did discuss international relationships from the point of view of big, broad objectives, rather than details. But on the basis of what we did discuss, I can say even today that I do not think any insoluble differences will arise among Russia, Great Britain, and the United States. . . .

To use an American and somewhat ungrammatical colloquialism, I may say that I "got along fine" with Marshal Stalin. He is a man who combines a tremendous, relentless determination with a stalwart good humor. I believe he is truly representative of the heart and soul of Russia; and I believe that we are going to get along very well with him and the Russian people--very well indeed.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴Feis, op. cit., p. 238.

¹⁰⁵Franklin D. Roosevelt, "'Keep Us Strong in Our Faith That We Fight for a Better Day for Humankind'--Christmas Eve Fireside Chat on Teheran and Cairo Conferences, December 24, 1943," The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), XII, 558.

These words must have been comforting to the American people that Christmas Eve, but Norman Graebner, who included them in his 1964 edition of readings concerning American foreign policy, could only exercise hindsight in confirming the growing American suspicion of Russia during 1943; Graebner, in introducing this Fireside Chat, said:

The President described accurately the imposing military situation, especially in the Far East, but ignored, in his description of the postwar world, the clear warnings of Soviet ambition in eastern Europe, which Stalin had made no effort to hide. In the utopianism of such public statements Roosevelt laid the foundation for eventual disillusionment and conflict.¹⁰⁶

In 1941, after Germany invaded Russia, Americans became increasingly sympathetic toward the Soviet Union. In 1942, they were tremendously impressed by the bravery and strength exhibited by the Russians. By 1943, the power of Russia, when viewed in the context of postwar claims and goals, took on new meaning. Americans became suspicious about postwar compatibility with Russia early in the year, but their hopes were buoyed up by the later conferences.

¹⁰⁶ Norman A. Graebner, ed., Ideas and Diplomacy: Readings in the Intellectual Tradition of American Foreign Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 657.

CHAPTER III

AMERICA'S DISILLUSIONMENT WITH RUSSIA

The American public's hope for amenable postwar relations with Russia that was further encouraged by the Moscow and Teheran conferences waned throughout 1944 and 1945. As far as Americans' feelings about the Soviet Union were concerned, these two years actually appear to be the beginning of the Cold War, for the distrust of Russia that Americans later manifested had definite origins during this time.

1944

Early in 1944, several small actions of Russia were disconcerting to her American ally. She accused Great Britain of scheming for a separate peace with Germany,¹ then accused the Pope of being pro-fascist.² Americans were perplexed by Russia's assertive attitude, but they became

¹See "Ugly Seams in a Pretty Fabric," The Christian Century, LXI (January 26, 1944), 99-100; "Bear's Way," Time, XLIII (January 31, 1944), 34; "Russian Relations: In the Melodrama of Power Politics, We Need Steady Nerves Until All Returns Are In," Life, XVI (January 31, 1944), 24.

²See "Devious Diplomacy: Izvestia on Vatican Policy," Time, XLIII (February 14, 1944), 34; "The Kremlin and the Vatican," Life, XVI (February 14, 1944), 32; "No Truce Between Russia and the Vatican," The Christian Century, LXI (February 16, 1944), 195. A writer for The Nation concluded that Russia was unused to the position of world leader and felt that the United States and Great Britain, because of their experience, had an advantage over Russia. To counteract such an advantage, Stalin tried the techniques of badgering, jolting, and mystifying his allies. See Joachim

apprehensive when Russia displayed this attitude in matters regarding Poland.

As the Red Army pushed into Poland in January 1944, an article, "Don't Stir Distrust of Russia," by Wendell Willkie, appeared in the New York Times. Willkie's attitude toward Russia was very favorable; he did, however, mention that "one of the most pressing questions on everybody's mind" concerned "what Russia intends to do about the political integrity of small states around her borders--Finland, Poland, the Baltic and Balkan States."³ Surprisingly, in view of the general tenor of the article, the Soviet newspaper Pravda berated Willkie. This Pravda rebuke of Willkie and an Associated Press report of information given in the Soviet Information Bulletin⁴ led some Americans to conclude that the Soviet Union was making an unofficial warning to the United States; a Times article was entitled "Pravda View Held Warning to Allies; Attack on Willkie

Joeston, "Why Stalin Acts That Way," The Nation, CLIII (April 1, 1944), 389-390.

³Wendell Willkie, "Don't Stir Distrust of Russia," New York Times, January 2, 1944, sec. 4, p. 4.

⁴Pravda Criticizes Willkie; Minimizes Border 'Crisis,'" New York Times, January 6, 1944, p. 1. In the bulletin a referral to the division of Poland by Germany and Russia in 1939 indicated that Russia considered parts of Poland to be Russian: "The Red Army Liberated western Byelo-Russia and the western Ukraine from the yoke of Polish usurpers."

Regarded as Notice Not to Interfere in Border Settlements."⁵

A New York Times editorial asserted that the complete Willkie text had been sent to Moscow before the Pravda criticism was written; this fact ruled out the possibility that the Soviets had reached a mistaken impression through a bits-and-pieces rendering of the article. In view of this condition, the Pravda reaction was considered "an inauspicious introduction to the whole rapidly approaching problem of a political settlement in eastern Europe,"⁶ and the New York Times questioned whether settlement would be made by Russia unilaterally on the basis of force. A later editorial pointed out that the Polish-Soviet dispute had been laid aside by Allied leaders in order to maintain unity in the war effort, but that the time had come for the Allies to discuss the issue. The ramifications of the issue included the question of the future security of Europe, as well as the condition of postwar collaboration between victors.⁷

⁵New York Times, January 6, 1944, p. 2. See also Ernest K. Lindley, "Behind Pravda's Attack on Willkie," Newsweek, XXIII (January 17, 1944), 39; "Behind the Pravda Incident," The Christian Century, LXI (February 2, 1944), 134-136; "P.S. to Teheran," Time XLIII (January 17, 1944), 12.

⁶"Pravda and Mr. Willkie," New York Times, January 7, 1944, p. 16.

⁷"Red Victories and Russia's Future Role," New York Times, January 9, 1944, sec. 4, p. 1. See also "Pretty Kettle," Time, XLIII (January 24, 1944), 18-19; "Poles Apart," Newsweek, XXIII (February 28, 1944), 32; "Russia Must Choose; Appeal to Soviet Russia by a Group of U.S. Citizens," Time, XLIII (March 20, 1944), 20.

The New Republic agreed that Pravda's public rebuke of Willkie had been purposeful: "They [the Russians] were talking to Anglo-American and world opinion, and they were calling the question of the Polish and Baltic boundaries a specifically Russian one, with which non-Russian opinion--however liberal--had no concern."⁸ The journal maintained that the important question was the validity of the Russian claim on the matter of Polish boundaries. It said that the Russians had good grounds for their position because the disputed land had been part of tsarist Russia (taken by the Poles in 1921), because most of the inhabitants were Russian and Ukrainian, and because Russia could not be expected to return land to the Polish ruling class, which was reckless and irresponsible. The New Republic implied that, in contrast to the Poles, Russia deserved the land:

The Russians have borne the brunt of the war against Hitler and are almost alone responsible for the doom of his fortunes today. The Americans and the British are not in a very good tactical position to argue with them about territory that is so close to their interests and to which they have such good historical claims.⁹

The Commonwealth also commented about the current "tactical position" of the United States regarding the solution of the Polish-Soviet boundary dispute. It recalled

⁸"Russia's Western Claims," The New Republic, CX (January 17, 1944), 72.

⁹Ibid.

that it had urged a discussion of the matter in 1942 when Molotov was in Washington: "We earnestly urged British and American statesmen to discuss this matter with Molotov, striking the best bargain they could regarding freedom for the peoples in the territories to which Russia not altogether unjustly laid claim."¹⁰ The magazine pointed out that the bargaining position of the United States at that time was excellent; Russia needed American help, and Russian armies were several hundred miles from the pre-1939 boundary of Poland. The Commonweal further maintained that, although there were indications that Molotov would discuss the matter, the American State Department did not bring it up. Now the conditions had changed: "Precisely that which the State Department refused to accept or even discuss in 1942 is now substantially an accomplished fact, and in terms of outright annexation."¹¹

Whereas The Commonweal saw Russia's action in the Polish boundary situation as foreboding,¹² The New Republic

¹⁰"Polish Frontier," The Commonweal, XXXIX (January 21, 1944), 339.

¹¹Ibid., 340. A columnist for The Nation [Edward Estorick, "Polish-American Policy," CLVIII (June 17, 1944), 591-592] still pointed out the need for a clear-cut American policy concerning Poland: "Poland may have blundered and the U.S.S.R. may have been heavy-handed, but no valid settlement can be effected until a coherent policy has been agreed on by the United States and the United Kingdom."

¹²See also Sidney B. Fay, "The Russo-Polish Dispute," Current History, N.S., VI (March, 1944), 193-200; J. S. Brusher, "Bear at the Conference Table," The Catholic World, CLVIII (February, 1944), 465-469; "Whatever Became

arrived at a more optimistic conclusion:

There is now good reason to believe that the Russians will participate with us in the building of a broad structure of international security. But a necessary condition to such action on their part is that they should not themselves have the feeling of insecurity.¹³

A complication regarding the Polish issue was the break between the Soviets and the Polish Government-in-Exile in London. Russia had dissolved diplomatic relations with the Poles in 1943; the break came after the furor over the Katyn incident. In the spring of 1944, a rival group of Poles formed the Polish Liberation Committee in Lublin; because it was willing to cooperate with Moscow, Russia looked upon this group with favor and later officially recognized it as the legitimate government of Poland.

Czechoslovakia was also in circumstances similar to those of Poland; it anticipated occupation by Russia and it too had had a government-in-exile in London. Unlike the Poles, the Czechs in London had not antagonized Russia. In fact, the Czech leader, President Eduard Benes, had traveled to Moscow in December 1943 and signed the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Post-War Co-operation. The signing of this pact was another cause for American concern in early 1944; its existence

of the Atlantic Charter?" The Christian Century, LXI (January 26, 1944), 100.

¹³"Russia's Western Claims," op. cit., p. 72.

seemed contrary to the agreements at Teheran. There (and at the Moscow Conference) it had been agreed that an overall system of international security supported by the Big Four allies would be set up, and in its comment about the pact, the New York Times quoted Secretary of State Cordell Hull, who had said that under such a collective system, there would be no need for power politics and alliances (Hull also predicted that the future use of air power would overcome the need for buffer states).¹⁴ The New Republic viewed the pact differently: "The Russian-Czech Pact has pointed the way toward regional peace and security in Eastern Europe."¹⁵ The magazine did not consider this pact a violation of the trust of Teheran; instead, the treaty would hasten Russia's readiness to "approach the large questions of world settlement in the spirit of Moscow and Teheran"¹⁶ by calming Russia's fears.

¹⁴"Pravda View Held as Warning to Allies," New York Times, January 9, 1944, sec. 4, p. 1.

¹⁵"Russia's Western Claims," op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁶Ibid. The New Republic later said that the burden of proof of a willingness to cooperate lay on the United States and Britain: "Moscow and Teheran represented tremendous forward steps, in that we abandoned the more patent forms of our anti-Russian activities and came to a more or less firm understanding on military matters, though it is far from certain that our commitment at Teheran regarding a western front was as positive as the Russians desired. It is no belittling of Moscow and Teheran to say, however, that Great Britain and the United States, having passed from political hostility to political neutrality, have not yet--in spite of the Anglo-Russian treaty--taken

In March 1944, President Roosevelt continued to express confidence in Russia's cooperation in the face of some Americans' suspicion of Russia's postwar goals:

On international cooperation, we are now working, since the last meeting in Teheran, in really good cooperation with the Russians. And I think the Russians are perfectly friendly; they aren't trying to gobble up all the rest of Europe or the world. They didn't know us, that's the really fundamental difference. They are friendly people. They haven't got any crazy ideas of conquest, and so forth; and now that they have got to know us, they are much more willing to accept us. And we are working in with them on actual operations and plans much better than we did before, just because we didn't know each other.

So that was one of the great gains of last fall in Teheran. Things of that kind take quite a while to work out with people who are five or six thousand miles away, who don't talk our language, English--and we certainly don't know Russian. And yet we are getting somewhere with them.

And all these fears that have been expressed by a lot of people here--with some reason--that the Russians are going to try to dominate Europe, I personally don't think there's anything in it. They have got a large enough "hunk of bread" right in Russia to keep them busy for a great many years to come without taking any more headaches.¹⁷

the next step to genuine political cooperation of a sort that would convince Russia she can safely entrust her future to collective security underwritten by the two great Western powers. Unless and until we are prepared to take such a step, we shall see a continuation of what will look to the outside like fairly ruthless power politics by Moscow and will look to the Russians themselves like minimum action in their own safety, in collaboration with the most democratic elements to be found in the populations of neighboring countries." "Russia in Europe," The New Republic, CX (January 24, 1944), 104.

¹⁷ Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Informal, Extemporaneous Remarks to Advertising War Council Conference, March 8, 1944," The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, XIII, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), p. 99.

Despite the President's optimistic outlook, William Chamberlin, always suspicious, cautioned Americans to be aware of current misinformation about Russia. In his article, "Information, Please, About Russia," Chamberlin listed some of the inaccuracies, and even falsehoods, about Russia presented to Americans in books, newspapers and magazines, and then he gave "the facts." Though he credited a lack of familiarity with Russian history and institutions for some of the mistakes, he asserted that some misrepresentations were intentional:

Two conscious or unconscious propaganda patterns can also be discerned in some of the blunders which have been listed. There is sometimes an effort to build up synthetic goodwill toward the Soviet Union by misrepresenting historically indisputable facts, even of very recent occurrence. And some writers get into the habit of trying to exalt the Soviet regime by indulging in exaggerated and indiscriminating disparagement of Russia before the Revolution.¹⁸

Chamberlin concluded that the use of falsehood to promote either of the propaganda patterns, despite good intentions, was not likely to serve any good purpose:

The case for amicable future relations between the United States and the Soviet Union is so firmly rooted in the interests of the two peoples that it needs no support from false testimony. And false testimony, especially in a country where there is freedom of speech and of the press, is likely to backfire.¹⁹

¹⁸William H. Chamberlin, "Information, Please, About Russia," Harper's Magazine, CLXXXVIII (April, 1944), 412.

¹⁹Ibid.

Evidently the propaganda that concerned Chamberlin had little influence upon many Americans. In answer to a question asked in July by a National Opinion Research Center poll, less than half of Americans believed that Russia could be trusted to cooperate with the United States after the war (the same question was asked again in December, and the percentages remained almost identical; 47 per cent said we could trust Russia, 35 per cent said not, and 18 per cent was undecided).²⁰

In the autumn of 1944, Americans were concerned about Russia's "liberation" of such countries as Bulgaria; she evidently intended to exercise unilateral control over her neighbors.²¹ At this time a dramatic event took place in Poland. On August 1, as the Red Army pushed toward Warsaw, the Warsaw Home Army, seeking to hasten the defeat of the Nazis, staged an uprising. To the surprise of the Polish patriots, the Red Army, only a few miles away, did not continue its advance into Warsaw. The Poles soon ran out of ammunition, and their supply was only sporadically replenished in mid-August by American support drops. (The American planes were sent from bases in Italy, and it was

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Public Opinion Quarterly, VIII (Fall, 1944), 455, 585.

²¹
 See "Bear in the Balkans," Newsweek, XXIV (October 9, 1944), 58; and Edgar Snow, "Eastern Europe Swings Left," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVII (November 11, 1944), 9-11.

a hazardous round-trip. Only much later were the American planes permitted to land at Russian bases or did the Soviets use their own planes to aid Warsaw.) Sixty-three days after the beginning of the uprising, the Poles submitted to the Nazis. Two hundred thousand patriots had been killed or wounded, and 85 per cent of Warsaw was destroyed or damaged.²²

Even before the final outcome of the situation on October 2, The Commonweal expressed dismay about Russia's actions:

Two recent developments cannot help making Americans and Britons wonder whether Moscow is practicing even a minimum of openness. The more dramatic of these is the situation in Warsaw. This tragic episode now emerges a little more clearly from the welter of conflicting reports. Beyond question the uprising of the Polish patriots was called for by both the English and the Russian Polish radio. It took place. That it was called for seems to have been a ghastly mistake, but once the mistake was made, decency required that both parties to the mistake do their best to redeem it. At great risk the RAF did its best; at far less risk, the Russian air force did nothing.²³

²²The details of this incident were taken from Newsweek: "Defeat of Patriots at Warsaw Widens Polish-Russian Breach," Newsweek, XXIV (October 16, 1944), 48, 50. In Russia at War, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc. 1964), p. 883, Alexander Werth stated that the Polish deaths in Warsaw numbered 300,000 and that nine-tenths of the city had been almost completely destroyed by the time the Soviets entered Warsaw in January 1945. Gabriel Kolko, however, said in Politics of War that 166,000 Poles died and about one half of the buildings in Warsaw were destroyed. See Kolko, op. cit., p. 117.

²³"The Russian Record," The Commonweal, XL (September 22, 1944), 531. The second development that disturbed The Commonweal was the formation of the Free Germany National Committee in Moscow, composed of captured German

Newsweek's account of the Nazi suppression of the revolt mentioned the subsequent recriminations that occurred between the Polish Government-in-Exile and the Soviet-backed Polish Liberation Committee:

The Liberation Committee accuses the exile government of calling the revolt for political reasons without consulting the Red Army. The exile government says that Russian radio station urged the action. Broadcasts reported by the Office of War Information in Washington show that the Liberation Committee did exhort the Warsaw fighters to continue with the promise that aid was coming immediately. That aid was never given and the Poles now think that the Russians welcomed the revolt and its failure as a cheap method of wiping out what might have been a troublesome non-Communist organization.²⁴

Newsweek also reported some of the conclusions that American and British diplomats voiced, one of which concerned Russia's policy regarding Poland:

Russia's avowed desire for a "strong and independent" Poland has been disproved by the facts. The original Soviet conditions for recognition of the Polish Government-in-Exile demanded acceptance of the Curzon Line boundary and the removal of General Kazimierz Sosnkowski as commander-in-chief. These conditions have now been fulfilled but the Russians are as far from recognition as ever.²⁵

officers and led by a Junker general. See "Stalin and the Junkers," The Commonweal, XL (September 15, 1944), 510-516.

²⁴"Defeat of Patriots at Warsaw Widens Polish-Russian Breach," op. cit., p. 50. Several authors of later books believed that although the Russians were not unhappy about the removal of a potential threat (the Polish underground), the Red Army's reason for not advancing was because it was militarily impossible for it to do so, since Warsaw was well protected for miles around. See Werth, p. 882, and Albert Seaton, The Russo-German War, 1941-1945 (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 530-531.

²⁵Ibid.

The ambivalent nature of Russia's dealings with Poland continued until the last day of 1944, when Russia recognized the Lublin group (Liberation Committee) as the Provisional Government of Poland. The frustrations that some Americans must have felt in this year of uncertainty is perhaps best expressed by a statement that had appeared in The Commonweal:

For three years The Commonweal has tried to be fair in its attitude toward Russia. While unalterably opposing certain historic elements in the Soviet regime, we have sought to appraise the good changes which unquestionably have been taking place in this vast empire and have given all credit to the heroism and self-sacrifice of its people, thanks largely to which our victory in the war now seems assured. We have always insisted that a certain mutual openness of policy is the one essential if England, the United States and Russia are to live together in the world after the war--and to look forward to any other possibility is to be very close to despair.²⁶

The year 1944 had been a frustrating one for Americans who had placed high hopes on Russia's open and mutual cooperation, implied by its participation at the Moscow and Teheran conferences. To the American public, Russia's unilateral handling of Poland and her evident intention to act alone in the liberation of other neighboring countries caused great uneasiness and signaled the beginning of disillusionment.

²⁶"The Russian Record," op. cit., p. 531.

1945

The American public's disillusionment that had been aroused during 1944 increased during 1945. The general impression that one has when he reads what Americans said about Russia during 1945 is that Americans realized that they had to deal with, and had to be firm with, Russia. Since Russia had developed into a world power, there was no question about the necessity of America's dealing with her. What concerned Americans about this task was the fact that they knew very little about what Russia really intended to do. The term "iron curtain," which began to appear in print in 1945,²⁷ symbolized the Russian reluctance to divulge information. Those who speculated about what Russia might be thinking began to recognize that their speculations were mere conjectures. Even The New Republic admitted that "most important of all is the fact that the top Russian figures are not Western liberals, as we keep trying to pretend they are but Russian communists."²⁸

The American concern for a realistic approach to the U.S.-Soviet relationship was best expressed by The Christian Century:

²⁷ Although this term became famous after Winston Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain" speech in March 1946, it had been used earlier.

²⁸ "Poland, Russia and America," The New Republic, CXII (January 3, 1945), 35.

It is high time, therefore, that all Americans began to think about Russia with a new seriousness. And that means to think about Russia, not according to the prewar patterns and cliches, but in the vastly changed relationship which Russia, the great victor of the war, bears to the rest of the world. That means, for one thing, that it is a waste of time to worry about Russia as an exponent of communistic ideology or as the possible source of a new social order. The actual Russia which has come out of this war is primarily a gigantic agglomeration of power. . . . This is the Russia we must reckon with. It is a power which thinks in terms of power and will act in those terms. . . . How are we to understand, how to come to terms with this Russia? Surely the first step, the step we must take at once, is to make a resolute effort to look at the world which the war is leaving us as Russia must look at it. . . . Nothing is to be gained, therefore, by wailing about Russia's unreadiness to cooperate with the other members of the Big Three or about her attitude of suspicion toward them if they insist on a basis of cooperation which ignores or would deny that which Stalin believes is to Russia's interest.²⁹

Certainly this realization was caused, in part, by negative American reaction to Russia's treatment of Poland and other East European nations. Russia had agreed with the United States and Britain that, among other things, the United Nations would seek no aggrandizement (territorial or other), that no territorial changes would be made except in accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, and that no one of the Big Three would take action without the consent of the others. She had

²⁹ "Ascendent Russia," The Christian Century, LXII (June 6, 1945), 672. See also Demaree Bess, "Can We Live With Russia?" The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVIII (July 7, 1945), 9-10; Raymond Swing, "Russia and Ourselves," The Atlantic Monthly, CLXXVI (June, 1945), 46-47; "The Problems of Russian Relations," The Commonweal, XLII (May 18, 1945), 108-109.

agreed at Yalta to the broadening of the Polish provisional government by including in it Poles from abroad and inside Poland who would be chosen by a three-power committee.³⁰

Americans were, therefore, angered that Russia later vetoed every Pole suggested by the Americans and the British, and that she pressed for the representation of the Lublin government at the conference at San Francisco. They furthermore resented Russia's unilateral dealings with Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania and Austria.³¹

There were other causes for American irritation with Russia. She demanded three seats in the future United

³⁰In violation of agreements at Teheran, Stalin had acted unilaterally and recognized the Lublin government as the provisional government of Poland before going to the Yalta Conference. At the conference Roosevelt and Churchill tried to modify somewhat this fait accompli. See Edgar A. Mowrer, "Genial Blackmail," Time, XLV (January 22, 1945), 32; "From Failure to Victory: Russian Control of the West," Time, XLV (February 19, 1945), 34; "Reds Are Lenient or Tough: It Depends on Who Is Next Door," Newsweek, XXV (January 22, 1945), 53; "Stalin Recognition of Lublin Poles Brings a Showdown," The Christian Century, LXII (January 17, 1945), 69; William H. Chamberlin, "Some Truths About Poland," The American Mercury, LX (February, 1945), 204-212; "Poland, Russia, and America," The New Republic, CXII (January 3, 1945), 35-37.

³¹See Ernest K. Lindley, "How Good Is Russia's Word?" Newsweek, XXV (April 30, 1945), 44; "Look a Russian in the Eye," Time, XLV (April 30, 1945), 25; Harold Bosley, "Who's an Appeaser Now?" The Christian Century, LXII (March 7, 1945), 297-299; "Scratch a Russian; The Poles Find Stalin Tough to Deal With," Newsweek, XXV (March 12, 1945), 56; "San Francisco Outcome Clouded by Showdown Over Poland Issue," Newsweek, XXV (April 30, 1945), 48; James M. Gillis, "Stalin Refuses to Play Ball," The Catholic World, CLXI (June, 1945), 193-197; Eugene Lyons, "Appeasement at Yalta," The American Mercury, LX (April, 1945), 461-468; Charlotte E. Braun, "Balkans After Yalta," Current History, N.S., VIII (May, 1945), 421-425.

Nations Assembly (a demand which Roosevelt and Churchill had agreed to at Yalta and which was kept secret until the news broke in a New York Herald Tribune story). And Americans wondered what had happened to fifteen members of the London-directed Polish underground who had revealed themselves to the Red Army for the purpose of joining the to-be-reorganized Polish government; they had disappeared. And at the conference in San Francisco, the Soviet representative, V. M. Molotov, displayed an uncooperative attitude in the beginning when he objected to some of the procedural matters.³²

Other events regarding the American-Russian relationship were discussed less extensively than those mentioned above. Some Americans were heartened by the Russian renunciation of her neutrality pact with Japan,³³ but

³²See James M. Gillis, "Save Our Soul at San Francisco," The Catholic World, CLXI (April, 1945), 1-10; "Russia and San Francisco," The New Republic, CXII (April 9, 1945), 463; "Suggestions for San Francisco," The Commonwealth, XLII (April 20, 1945), 3-4; "Rift in the Big Three," The New Republic, CXII (June 4, 1945), 771-772; Ernest K. Lindley, "How Good Is Russia's Word?" Newsweek, XXV (April 30, 1945), 44; "San Francisco Outcome Clouded by Showdown Over Polish Issue," Newsweek, XXV (April 30, 1945), 48. Two columnists expressed concern about the anti-Russian sentiment evident in the United States; see Freda Kirchwey, "San Francisco Clears Its Decks," The Nation, CLX (May 5, 1945), 501-502; and I. F. Stone, "Trieste and San Francisco," The Nation, CLX (May 26, 1945), 589-590. For other evidence of anti-Russian feeling (because of the Polish question), see "Correspondence," The New Republic, CXII (April 30, 1945), 590.

³³The Nation commented about American reaction: "The ordinary American finds it almost impossible to worry

the Potsdam Conference (which ended August 2) and Russia's entrance into the war against Japan (August 8) seem to have evoked little comment, possibly because of the bombing of Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9).³⁴

A number of the remarks that Americans made about the U.S.-Soviet relationship were not, of course, prompted by single events. Problems related to the implementing of a good relationship were discussed. Some Americans suggested that, because Russia was deeply suspicious of the West, the United States should win her over with friendliness:

In regard to Russia, we must seek by genuine and continuous friendliness of policy to relax the deep suspicion of the West which colors Russian thinking so completely today. . . . Quite possibly, every verbal attack by American Russophobes prolongs

about the extent of Moscow's influence in Poland or the number of Russian votes in the Assembly when he suddenly sees a chance that the Pacific war may be ended many months sooner than appeared possible a week ago. The probability that Russia will help lick Japan is worth a dozen minor concessions in Europe to the man in the street." "Peace Weather: Barometer Rising," The Nation, CLX (April 14, 1945), 403.

³⁴ My research revealed scant contemporary commentary about Russia's participation at the Potsdam Conference or Russia's entrance into the war against Japan. See a New York Times editorial about Russia's declaration of war, August 9, 1945, p. 20. There were also some expressions of indignation about Russia's mistreatment of liberated American prisoners-of-war [see, for example, "Washington Trends," Newsweek, XXV (April 26, 1945), 24], and about Russia's continued unilateral dealings with Eastern European countries [see "Unilateral Tactics of Wary Reds Distort Shape of Postwar Europe," Newsweek, XXV (June 4, 1945), 50; and "What's All This?" Time, XLV (May 28, 1945), 20-21].

the continued mistreatment of Russian political prisoners in Siberian labor camps. Russian fears of the rest of the world are undoubtedly exaggerated; but they will never be put to rest until we give convincing evidence that we have actually and permanently renounced predatory private capitalism and the military imperialism that goes with it.³⁵

When Russia requested six billion dollars in American loans for postwar reconstruction, The New Republic said that giving it to her would be a "test of American friendship toward the Soviet Union . . . and proof that we are ready to implement our wartime professions of partnership by concrete deeds."³⁶

Other Americans thought that the United States did not have to prove its friendship. They had disliked the situation during the war of pleasing Russia almost to a point of "appeasement" and felt that a better postwar relationship would be one of balanced bargaining power:

Because of the success of our arms both in the Pacific and in Europe, Russia's bargaining position was nothing like as strong as might have been expected even a few months ago, and we further pointed out this is deep with consequence for the future and for peace. We believe that this is for the good, since for the last two or three years Russia's magnificent fight against Germany has been so essential to ourselves and to Great Britain that we had almost to "appease" her, that we could not take a firm line with her on any matter concerning which

³⁵ "Poland, Russia and America," The New Republic, op. cit., p. 37.

³⁶ "On Cooperating with Russia," The New Republic, CXII (February 5, 1945), 165. See also "Lend Lease for Russia," ibid. (May 28, 1945), 727.

she was at all insistent. . . .

In a world in which power plays any considerable part, relations between countries of vaguely equal wealth and position require that this equality apply also to national bargaining power. . . . The present balance is better [than even a reduction in Russia's political position] and makes it possible to be more hopeful for the future than we have had reason to be in some time.³⁷

Some Americans sharing this philosophy stressed the importance of being mindful of America's advantage when negotiating with Russia:

We Americans need not fear we are risking another world war by refusing to "appease" Stalin; he can afford another war even less than we can, and he needs our help much more than we need his. That is the basic fact which should govern Russian-American relations at present. If that fact is kept in mind by the United States Government, then we can gradually work out some method of living peacefully in the same world with Russia.³⁸

Many commentators enumerated specific strong points in America's bargaining position, and they advocated using such advantages in America's interest. America's economic superiority was one such advantage, and they said that it should be utilized with an eye to political gain:

But beyond argument is the fact that U.S. diplomacy has one strong card to play, and that is the economic. The U.S. is the most productive country the world has ever seen, and our economic power of persuasion can be used to generate its own propaganda. Loans, the promise of credits, outright gifts--these can be closely

³⁷"The Great Change, II," The Commonweal, XLII (April 20, 1945), 3. See also "Russia and Poland," ibid. (May 4, 1945), 60.

³⁸Demaree Bess, "Can We Live With Russia?" The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVIII (July 7, 1945), 87.

tied to the diplomacy of spreading our own principles of freedom. Certainly they should not be granted to those who use them against us.³⁹

Another American advantage was her possession of the atomic bomb; though few Americans suggested using it against Russia, some felt that possession of it was an important lever in Russian-American relations:

When that time comes [when Stalin, like other dictators, will someday have to make concessions to the democratic upsurge], and we can deal with the Russian people as we now deal with other peoples, the world will be ready for the degree of federation called for by the new facts of life. Until that day comes, there isn't much choice but to sit tight on the secret of the atomic bomb, keep out in front in scientific research . . . and pray.⁴⁰

Americans agreed that, despite the American advantages which would encourage a cooperative American-Russian relationship, they faced one major roadblock: lack of adequate two-way communication with Russia. Several writers

³⁹"America and Russia: To Equal the Communist Talent for Persuasion, We Must Develop Persuasiveness," Life, XIX (July 30, 1945), 20. For other articles concerning the political aspects of giving loans to Russia, see "Does Russia Want Credit?" Fortune, XXXII (July, 1945), 110; "\$7 Billion Comrade?" Time, XXIII (March 19, 1945), 23-24; Herbert Feis, "Political Aspects of Foreign Loans," Foreign Affairs, XXIII (July, 1945), 609-619; William H. Chamberlin, "Can We Do Business With Stalin?" The American Mercury, LXI (August, 1945), 194-201.

⁴⁰"The Long, Hard Road to World Order," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVIII (October 20, 1945), 128. See also Raymond Moley, "How to Behave Like a World Power: Russia, Rival or Friend," Newsweek, XXVI (October 15, 1945), 120; H. C. McGinnis, "Which War Comes Next?" The Catholic World, CLXI (July, 1945), 329-335; James M. Gillis, "Russia Is Bluffing," The Catholic World, CLVII (November, 1945), 104-106.

spoke of the difficulty of finding out what had happened in countries that Russia had liberated; The New Republic described the situation: "They clamp down an iron curtain of secrecy on the countries they have overrun--Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland."⁴¹ American correspondents had difficulties getting into the liberated countries:

Some of our correspondents, balked in their efforts to enter the countries "liberated" by Russia, have spoken of the barrier that separates them from their goal as a "Chinese wall." It is no mere wall. We could fly over a wall and drop communications within the wall as we drop communications even into Japan. The fact is that we can get in touch with the Japanese people more easily just now than we can with the Russian people.⁴²

Besides exclusion from Soviet-occupied territory, American correspondents faced other difficulties: censorship, limited contacts with Russians and a requirement of special permission for travel.⁴³

⁴¹"Poland, Russia and America," The New Republic, CXII (January 3, 1945), 36.

⁴²James M. Gillis, "'Poisonous' Criticism of Russia," The Catholic World, CLXI (July, 1945), 290.

⁴³William H. Chamberlin, "Can We Do Business With Stalin?" The American Mercury, LXI (August, 1945), 199. See also a letter written by the Moscow Anglo-American Correspondents Association which asserted that Russian censorship barred development of understanding between Russia and the rest of the world (New York Times, November 1, 1945, p. 1). Lack of knowledge about Russia had caused a curious American attraction for Molotov at the San Francisco meeting; Demaree Bess explained: "Why did Commissar Molotov focus so much attention upon himself, without much effort on his part? The answer seems to be that the Soviet Foreign Commissar arrived at the conference like a 'man from Mars.' Mr. Molotov came to San Francisco from a part of the world which has been so thoroughly blacked out that it seems as remote and mysterious as another planet." Demaree Bess, "Can We Live With Russia?" op. cit., p. 9.

Americans were distressed not only because the "iron curtain" (or "Chinese wall") stopped the flow of news from within the Soviet-dominated countries but also because it stopped American news from reaching those peoples. America's viewpoints, some writers felt, were being seriously distorted:

More urgently needed is some means of promoting among Russians some understanding of American ideals, activities and purposes. . . .

Unfortunately, history shows few instances in which unity has emerged from a relationship in which one party was obsequiously conciliatory while the other continually represents its over-anxious friend as an enemy and a conspirator. The sad part of it all is that Stalin appears to cherish our friendship less than he welcomes the opportunity to use us as a whipping boy. That role appears to serve the Communist purpose--which is to promote "unity" among Russians behind Stalin--better than an honest picture of America would do. It is on this inexorable fact that hopes of fair American news in the Soviet press have so far broke down.⁴⁴

This breakdown in American-Soviet communication was a principal concern of Americans in 1945; another, as the foregoing account has indicated, was the need for a firm approach in dealing with Russia. Public opinion polls (taken in late 1944 and in 1945) revealed the same two concerns.⁴⁵

⁴⁴"Russia Needs Honest American News," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVII (March 24, 1945), 100. See also James M. Gillis, "'Poisonous' Criticism of Russia," op. cit., p. 290.

⁴⁵I have placed this 1944 poll along with the 1945 poll at the conclusion of this chapter because both are related and both indicated general and significant attitudes that Americans had toward Russia.

The sparseness of America's information about Russia and the consequences of this condition were discussed by Warren Walsh in his analysis of an October 1944 poll (taken by Princeton University's Office of Public Opinion Research). He concluded that only one American out of ten was even reasonably well-informed about the Soviet Union. He also said that the decisive factor in American opinion toward Russia appeared to be neither class, nor religion, nor political preference, but information; and he stated that the way to prepare the American people for friendly and effective cooperation with Russia was to supply them with an adequate, accurate knowledge of the Soviet Union. To do this, the whole-hearted cooperation of the Soviet Union was essential.⁴⁶

In September 1945, Fortune's editors evaluated its recent survey of opinion of Russia and concluded:

The U.S. attitude toward Russia is friendly but tough. Russia is not regarded as a child to be humored but as a nation of grown men and women, a nation that understands the simple rules of give and take. The friendship proffered is not uncritical. It is sturdy, stout, take-it-or-leave-it.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Warren Walsh, "What the American People Think of Russia," Public Opinion Quarterly, VIII (Winter, 1944-45), 513-522.

⁴⁷"U.S. Opinion on Russia," Fortune, XXXII (September, 1945), 233. Another significant revelation of this poll was that Americans showed that they considered Russia in two different ways: its government and its people. Their objections to Russia centered on matters of its government and policy (only 1.8 per cent had any complaints about the Russian people), and a majority of Americans felt

As for the correlation between information and opinion, the editors said:

The detail of the report underscores a point Fortune's Survey editors have made repeatedly in recent years--the close relation between opinion and information. The well-informed express a strikingly more balanced and discriminating opinion on Russia than do the uninformed. . . . The U.S. is clearly ready to go at least halfway toward active friendly relations with Russia. The rest is up to Russia.⁴⁸

In the eyes of American public opinion, the rest was up to Russia, for Americans had come to realize that the ties of war were not necessarily binding. They viewed Russian actions in Poland and East Europe as disregard for her allies and saw her establishment of an "iron curtain" as a frustrating rebuff to their wartime admiration. The illusions that this admiration had fostered were gone by the end of the war.

that the Russian people were friendly toward the United States. (See Fortune, p. 234) As for the importance of public opinion to the Russian government, two-thirds of Americans thought that the Russian government did not pay attention to the opinions of the Russian people or to world public opinion. (See Fortune, p. 236.)

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 233.

CONCLUSION

American attitudes toward Russia changed significantly during the war. These attitudes were inconsistent because they were primarily reactions to Russia's actions, which to Americans did not appear to be consistent. Russia allied herself with Germany and invaded Poland and Finland; then Russia fought valiantly against her German invaders; and toward the end of the war, Russia did not cooperate fully with her allies. These actions caused Americans to manifest such diverse attitudes as near-hostility, admiration and friendliness, and disillusionment. For a while, Americans did seem to feel comfortable with their Russian ally; at least they demonstrated their willingness to be friends and their appreciation for Russia's war efforts throughout 1942. But later, when Russia showed that her cooperation for postwar peace depended upon Allied concessions, Americans concluded that they should be firm with Russia. This sentiment was generally expressed before the end of the war; thus in the eyes of the American public, the Cold War began even earlier than the traditional 1945-46 date.

Although Russia's actions during the war did determine, to a great extent, what Americans thought about Russia, there were other factors which contributed to the ambivalent and mutable views that Americans manifested.

Certainly these views were partially influenced by prewar attitudes, by the fact that Americans were basically unaware of Russia's policies, and by the biased nature of commentators who wrote most frequently about Russia during the war.

Three prewar factors which affected attitudes about Russia were evident during the war: fear of Americans who were communist sympathizers, basic American friendliness for the Russian people, and distrust of the Russian government. The first of these became less important as conditions changed during the war. In 1939, pro-Soviet sympathizers were conspicuous; their admiration for the Soviet experiment caused American concern and comment in light of Russia's actions that year. By 1942, however, few Americans were concerned about pro-Soviet sympathizers, for American communists and "leftists" were hardly distinguishable from other Americans who wanted to see Russia help to defeat Germany. The friendliness that Americans had demonstrated toward the Russian people prior to World War II was revived during the war. In fact, when American opinion about Russia was most favorable, it was because Americans were sympathetic to the conditions and actions of the Russian people (particularly during the Russian crisis of 1942). Throughout the war, those who wanted to arouse sympathy for Russia appealed to Americans' feelings for the Russian people. On the other hand, the third prewar attitude that

recurred, a distrust of the Russian government, was often emphasized by those who wanted to criticize Russia. This fundamental dichotomy (a favorable feeling for the people, but a distrust of the government) seemed to exist throughout the war. Emphasis was placed upon one or the other of these sentiments according to changing American opinion. Toward the end of the war, for example, the actions of the Russian government were most frequently commented upon.

Another factor which affected American public opinion was the lack of open communication with Russia during the war. Americans complained of Russia's secretiveness even before they began to speak of her "iron curtain" in 1945. Aside from the actions of Russia which commanded headlines, Stalin effectively checked the dispersal of new information about Russia with a policy of secrecy.

Because Stalin did not elucidate his policies and because there was a lack of current pertinent information, American writers, for the most part, voiced views that had originated with pre-1939 observations about Russia. Journals and specific writers who wrote the most about Russia had the strongest biases, biases which were formed before the war started. The New Republic and The Nation were written by liberals who had approved of the implications of Russia's internal programs; during the war, they voiced approval of Russia's actions or generally gave Russia the benefit of the doubt. The Commonweal and The Catholic

World, conservative journals, regarded communism as a threat to Christianity; they were generally distrustful of Russia during the war. Individual writers who wrote articles for other magazines, especially prolific writers like William H. Chamberlin and Eugene Lyons, reflected opinions about Russia that seemed to have been formed during prewar visits to Russia.

Although it is difficult to generalize about the perceptiveness of the American press and public during this era (so many comments were made that some of them were inevitably discerning), Americans seemed on the whole to be somewhat naive. They were surprised a number of times by Russia's actions, perhaps because Americans believed that friendliness and cooperation toward Russia would necessarily foster reciprocal Russian cooperation. Americans were therefore dismayed when Russia made decisions without consulting her allies or without regard for previous agreements with her allies. Toward the end of the war, however, Americans expressed attitudes that were more mature, for they began to realize that Russia would pursue her own interests and to believe that the United States should act to check Soviet influence in certain areas.

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